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CHRIST IN THE LIFE OF TO-DAY

GEORGE M. MATHEWS

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Christ in the Life of To-day

By
Rev. George Martin Mathews, D.D., LL.D.

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To My Wife

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"Above all things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness."—Paul.

FOREWORD

The author, at the request of many friends, has decided to put in permanent form some thoughts and impressions which he has gathered during the years of his ministerial life, and present them to the public in the hope that they will be helpful to all readers, and especially that they may stimulate the thinking, motives, and ideals of young Christians in the personal, church, social, college, and business relations, during the stress and strain of present-day life.

The themes treated in the book cover a wide range of discussion, bearing upon the one purpose of showing the value of Christ's pervasive presence and influence upon personal character and daily living.

Close personal union with Christ lies at the foundation of all true Christian living and service. Every true life starts in Christ, roots in him, is fed from him, and realizes its fullness in him. The divine life in us results in the reproduction of his life in our lives. That gives beauty, fellowship, power, and an abiding sense of spiritual sonship. Christ in us is the keynote of true living, for all true living is Christ; and this is Christianity's most convincing present-day credential.

It is hoped that this humble volume from the pen of one who has sought to present truth in a simple, practical form and manner will be helpful to all who may peruse its pages.

If, in any degree, the aim of the book shall be realized in the strengthening, inspiration, and enrichment of any single life, the author will feel that it will not have been written in vain.

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A UNIQUE CROWNING.

The trial of Jesus, culminating in his execution, has no parallel in human history. No leader of men was ever so misunderstood and maltreated as Jesus.

He was the victim of injustice. The Jewish court plotted his ruin and the Roman tribunal failed to protect him in his rights. There was not the slightest ground for the arrest of Jesus. Not a single item in the indictment was sustained. It was impossible to secure the concurrent testimony of two witnesses against him. Even Herod dismissed Jesus and pronounced all accusations groundless and frivolous. Pilate finally grew impatient and insisted upon the absolute innocence of Christ. He declared three times, "I find no fault in this man." Even the wife of Pilate warned him not to do injury to that innocent Galilean. And Judas Iscariot, pierced through with the awful pangs of remorse, cast back the thirty pieces of silver, and, flinging himself down in unutterable woe, exclaimed, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood." And yet, in the face of all this array of testimony, the authorities released a robber rather than Jesus. What flagrant injustice! What must be the unrighteousness of a cause that would resort to an illegal trial and an unjust sentence to accomplish its murderous purpose!

Jesus was also the victim of inhumanity. Failing to fasten guilt upon him, his enemies resorted to ridicule—a dangerous weapon in the hands of a mob. They began to treat him as a pretended king. A king must wear a robe, and so they threw over his shoulders an old, cast-off garment. A king must wear a crown, and they plucked a few branches of acacia wood, full of thorns, and platting them into a wreath, crushed it down upon his head. A king must have a scepter, and they thrust

a reed in his right hand. Then the mob showed its inhumanity towards the lonely, helpless prisoner, by covering him with their spittle.

What a scene! It is the spectacle of the ages. It is the shame of humanity. It is the crime of the centuries. What is not human nature capable of! What base passions lie at the bottom of the human heart! But if our hearts revolt at such a scene, what must it have been to Jesus, with his pure soul and sensitive organism, to be in the hands of such coarse, ruthless men? But Jesus understood it all. He held the secret of human redemption. He knew the mystery of divine love, that carried him to the lowest depths of human degradation and woe in order to save the lost world.

But what is all this unique crowning to us? Shall we not interpret the true significance of this scene? Is it not all a mighty appeal to us to place a better crown upon the brow of our Christ?

This crowning of Jesus furnishes an illustration of the treatment which truth often receives at the hands of men. Jesus was the perfect embodiment of all truth. He stood connected with all that was pure and true and real in the past. He was the realization of all the divine thoughts of the ages. He was the fulfillment of all type, symbol, prophecy, and law. All the gracious purposes of God in redemption centered in Christ. Hence he said, "I am the truth."

Jesus was also the defender of the truth. He was the true son of Abraham. He was a friend of the Mosaic law. He supported it. He came to fulfill it. Hence, he upheld the Jewish commonwealth and taught the principles of the Hebrew religion.

Then, Jesus was the revealer of the truth. He was the greatest of all prophets, standing at the head of the prophetic order. He was the legislator for his people.

His greatest service to the Hebrew nation was to clarify the truth the people already held. He carried the doctrines of the old covenant into the new covenant, and removed their obscurity in type and symbol. He divested the old law of its human additions and corruptions, clothing it in new forms and giving it broader applications. His teaching was an advance upon the teaching of the Jewish rabbis, but this very advance provoked their opposition. Jesus confronted their narrowness and bigotry. They were under the grip of conservatism and in the bondage of prejudice. They deliberately put out the new light that came to them. It was truth, misunderstood and maltreated.

But it has ever been so throughout the centuries since the time of Christ. The masses are not ready for the higher stages of truth and its newer applications. God sends it in advance of the multitude. There must be a forerunner to do pioneer work and to endure the hardships of a pioneer. Truth must earn its way to recognition and acceptance. Its path is often rough and hard. The great leaders in reform have had to wear a crown of thorns in order to advance the cause of humanity. John the Baptist suffered for righteousness and purity. Luther sacrificed for the truth's sake. Lincoln stood out for human liberty, but it cost him his life. What an appeal here for candor and charity and research! Let all else go for the truth's sake.

This strange crowning shows how real dignity and worth may be disguised before men. None of that company understood Jesus. They scorned him as a fanatic and pitied him as a dreamer. They were too coarse and blind to appreciate his worth. They mistook his silence for imbecility, his meekness for conscious guilt, his patience for self-reproach; but not so. He possessed infinite dignity. He came from another world. He was "one

with the Father," coequal and coeternal. He was the eternal son of God before he touched humanity as the son of man. He was also the king of men. He was the perfect ideal of his race. He possessed all the elements of a perfect manhood, and stood regal in all the qualities of character and spirit, having the royalty of meekness, the royalty of patience, the royalty of love. How cruelly Jesus was misunderstood! If they had placed their hands upon his bleeding temple, they would have discovered a brain throbbing with thoughts of love for men. If they had pressed their ear to his bosom, they would have found beneath that purple robe a great heart beating in sympathy for the lost and perishing. If they could have interpreted the language of his broken heart, they would have heard, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

And yet men always are making false measurements of true greatness and worth. Their standards often are low and false. They judge from external condition rather than the inner life and motive.

Jesus corrected the ambition of the mother of James and John by showing her that neither position nor power nor wealth is the sign of nobility; character, manhood, service—these are the insignia of true royalty.

Joseph was as great in the prison cell as he was on the throne of Egypt. Daniel's nobility shone as brightly in the den of lions as it did in the college and palace of the king. God counted him a prince among men. Look at St. Paul. He was a patriot, a hero, a benefactor, a friend of humanity—the greatest thinker and spiritual giant of his day, and yet the world did not know his worth. He was despised, maligned, and maltreated for the truth's sake, but God understood his princely spirit and finally crowned him with the crown of righteousness, which has shone for twenty centuries.

What a poor weakling Pilate showed himself to be! He had an unequalled opportunity to show manliness. There was only one course for him to pursue. He ought to have summoned all the resources of his manhood and dared to do right toward Jesus, come what may. He ought to have been loyal to duty and to conscience. Jesus stood the test. He did not swerve in the hour of trial. The world has no use for time-serving Pilates. It needs men who fear God and dare to do right. A premium needs to be put upon moral chivalry and spiritual knighthood. May we catch the spirit of him who is the hero of the ages.

In that unique crowning we discover the secret of Jesus' influence over men. It lies in his infinite sacrifice for others. Why is it that the power of Judaism is broken and crushed? It is because of her malicious thirst for the blood of Christ. Why is it that Pilate made a shipwreck of life and has long since been lost in the ruins of the centuries? It is because he stood for the evils of Cæsarism, the lust of greed, the pride of military conquest, the course of oppression, and the spirit of self-aggrandizement. Why is it that the influence of Christ has increased through the centuries? Men of all classes and conditions are under the power of his personal magnetism. Everywhere we see signs of his spiritual regnancy. He is laying the foundation of his kingdom in the human soul and finding a welcome in sorrow-stricken hearts. The secret of Christ's spiritual enthronement and dominant influence lies in his infinite sufferings, the humiliation of his earth-life, his humbleness of birth, his deep poverty and homelessness; in his patient endurance of the vile insults of his countrymen, the shame and curse of the cross, and the hail of mockery that fell upon him in his dying hour. How that treatment must have burned into his pure, sensitive soul and become the bitter

ingredients in his cup of suffering! Oh, what unspeakable sacrifice! Who can measure the depth of his humiliation! Who can understand the mystery of Gethsemane and the meaning of Calvary! Who can fathom the abyss of his unutterable sorrow and woe!

And yet those infinite sufferings are the real secret of Jesus' marvelous power and attraction. They were essential to his qualifications as the Savior, making perfect his atoning priesthood. A thornless crown would not befit the Savior of men. Jesus must drink the cup of suffering to the very dregs in order to save men at their lowest and worst. The Lord Jesus Christ trod the solitary path of humiliation from Bethlehem to Olivet in order to save men from their sins and sorrows. That crown of suffering is Christ's greatest glory and man's only hope.

We must not forget that in some mysterious sense Christ's sufferings were vicarious. "He gave Himself for us," and was made a "curse for us." Christ's outward dethronement, his strange contact with the sins and sorrows of humanity, his actual getting under the world's burden, is the glory of his spiritual achievement. His infinite sacrifice is the secret of his magic power that touches the heart of humanity.

We have abundant illustrations of the power of sacrifice for others. The monuments erected in honor of the soldiers of our country show what a grateful nation thinks of its heroes. The nation has declared that because they made sacrifice for others they are worthy of high honor. It has always been so and always will be so. The heroic sacrifice of Leonidas and his brave fellows has been sung around the world. John Howard spent his fortune, wasted his health, and laid down his life for the sick and imprisoned; he is enshrined in the hearts of all England. Florence Nightingale, of high

birth, great wealth, and broad culture, left her splendid home and went to the battlefield to care for the soldiers that had fallen under their country's flag, nursing some back to health and comforting others in the dying hour. It is no wonder that the queen sent her a letter of thanks and a gold medal, and the soldiers of the army collected in pennies money enough to erect a statue to her honor.

But who can measure the sacrifice of Christ? He possessed infinite dignity. He was the Son of God, the eternal king. He wore the crown of the universe. He left it all and flew to our relief.

"For me these pangs he suffered,
For me this death was borne.
My sins gave sharpness to the nail,
And pointed every thorn."

This spiritual attraction of Christ lies in his sufferings, as an expression of divine love for sinners. It is this revelation of the heart of God that draws men back to God. This is what started the prodigal home.

Then this attractive power of Jesus is the power of his personal sympathy for men. Paul declared that the suffering of Christ contributed to his qualifications as a Savior in the development of sympathy. "He was made perfect through suffering." Jesus touched humanity at every point of personal experience. We can see the divine reason for Christ's identification with humanity in all its experiences. The world needed some heavenly visitant to touch the low places of earth and pass through the same experiences we have. We need some one to bare his breast to the same blasts that strike us, and to uncover his head to everything that beats and falls upon us to crush us. Blessed be his name, we find just such a person in the Lord Jesus Christ! How the church needs to have this sympathy for men! Many have hard lives and need the compassion of others. Oh! the powers of

that word, "sympathy." It was that word that saved D. L. Moody, Jerry McCauley, John B. Gough, Frances Willard, and Eva Booth. The sweet thing about Jesus was that he "touched" men, touched them with his compassion, sympathy, love.

"It is not the thing you say so much
As it is the thing you do,
To lighten the burden, touch the heart,
Performing a service true.

"The simple word is forgotten soon,
The flowers you send will die,
But the touch of kindness lives right on,
And will meet you there on high."

That unique crowning was the prophecy of Christ's universal kingship and supremacy. Christ's mock coronation did not disprove the fact of his real kingship. He was the eternal King, by divine appointment, independent of human environment or human will. His authority did not depend upon the will of Pilate or the vote of the motley crowd about him. Even at that supreme moment of his humiliation, Jesus was king, absolute, eternal, universal. He wore upon his torn brow the crown of the universe. The superscription in the three languages of the known world, written above his head on the cross, told of his universal rulership. Every part of that transaction in the judgment hall and on Calvary was a fulfillment of prophecy. There were representative classes gathered about him at the cross, that foretokened Christ's universal rule. All those world classes, with millions of their successors, were to be the subjects of his coming kingdom.

The fulfilled prophecy of a great spiritual harvest awaited the telling of the story of His sacrifice and love.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." The divine element of sacrifice in the life of Christ was the life-germ that would spring up into a world harvest. So Jesus Christ is the head of the greatest empire the world ever saw. The signs of his regnancy are evident everywhere. He is the king of truth, culture, art, music, and religion. Men and nations are acknowledging his lordship. Africa, China, India, Korea, and the islands of the sea are placing the diadem of faith and love upon his brow, while peoples groping in darkness and superstition are turning toward him, as the promise and hope of their redemption and deliverance.

Let us gather up all the sweet memories of the past, the rich blessings of the present, and all the bright hopes and aspirations of the future, and weave for Him a crown of laurels, to take the place of the crown of thorny acacia which he once wore for us. Let us imprint upon his radiant face the kiss of faith, as the promise of loyalty and the pledge of obedience. Let us enthrone him in our hearts and in our lives of service, and with the diadem of love and service, crown him Lord of all!

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS IN A TRUE LIFE.

The Jewish temple, erected by Solomon, was a magnificent and imposing structure. In its construction, one hundred and eighty thousand workmen were employed during a period of seven and one-half years. The materials put into it were gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and timber. The interior was beautified with all manner of precious stones; much of it was overlaid with gold and silver. We get some conception of the magnificence and splendor of that structure when we remember that, according to the present standard of value, the gold and silver alone collected for the temple amounted to four and one-half billion dollars. We do not wonder that the Queen of Sheba, when she beheld its material glory, exclaimed in rapturous astonishment, "Behold, the half has never been told."

At the entrance of the temple, Solomon erected two massive pillars, known as "Jachin" and "Boaz." These two pillars were of brass, eighteen cubits in height, embellished with the most beautiful designs that genius could devise and the hand of the master artist could execute. The striking description of the historian is found in one sentence, "And upon the top of the pillars was lilywork." (I. Kings 7:22.)

There is something suggestive in the fact that upon the massive columns that sustained the roof of the stately temple was the fine tracery of the artist's chisel in the most delicate ornamentation. From this combination of strength and beauty is suggested *two essential elements in every true life.*

Strength and beauty are admired the world over. They are twin sisters, each serving the other in mutual helpfulness and each weakened without the other. Strength without beauty may lose much of its influence

and charm, while beauty without strength may become a snare and a curse.

A perfect example of this combination is seen in the construction of the material universe. Wherever we look in nature there are evidences of majesty and loveliness, utility and grace, power and beauty.

The massive mountains are often covered with verdure and foliage of exceeding loveliness. The mighty rivers, the trackless pathways over which the immense commerce passes, flow through channels, on either side of which are scenes of surpassing delight. The ocean, majestic and emblematic of omnipotence, has hidden away in its depths corals of marvelous perfection, while on its shores lie shells of matchless brilliancy. Over against the storm cloud, holding in its hand forces mighty and resistless, may be seen the rainbow set in the heavens, unequalled as an exhibition of divine art and beautiful as a token of divine favor and mercy. Indeed, this entire earth, alike the temple of nature and the temple of God, massive and spacious, is embellished on its surface with objects of charming elegance and beauty.

And so I present these two elements of *strength* and *beauty* as essential to that larger and higher life to which we are divinely called.

There is fitness in the order in which these two elements are named. First, the casting of the massive pillars; afterwards the delicate tracery of the lilywork. First, power; then grace. First, the substantial structure, made strong and able to resist the ravages of storm and time and tide; then, following, the work of embellishment and ornamentation.

Then, the number of pillars spoken of in this connection is suggestive. Two magnificent pillars are rising under the fostering care of our Christian civilization, of

which we may be proud, namely, the pillars of Christian manhood and of Christian womanhood.

The tendency of the times is to disregard and to banish all unjust discriminations respecting sex, making it possible for boys and girls, for men and women, to stand side by side with equal recognition and opportunity, both in the temple of knowledge and in the field of service.

The first duty to which life calls us is the task of developing strength; not so much that of physical strength as moral. And yet, in these times of extravagance, exposure, and overwork, there has come an imperative demand for a healthy, vigorous body, hence, the emphasis now placed upon the gymnasium and athletic exercises as a means of developing the vigor of a sound body, in which a sound brain shall accomplish the largest measure of good in the world.

Just as in the resurrection life, the spiritual body in a perfect degree will be the instrument and expression of the glorified soul, so these mortal bodies of ours should be made the most efficient servants of the mind and will, working out the problem of human existence and human destiny.

But I refer particularly to that which pertains to the realm of the spirit of man, the strength which invariably comes from foundation principles deeply laid and firmly grasped.

A desirable element in personal character is anchorage, *stability*. There is no hope of strength without certain fixed principles, settled convictions and abiding purposes. Some things should be settled in our minds early and forever. We cannot afford to be constantly laying new foundations. There comes a period when this condition ought to be past and our first principles thoroughly established, otherwise we can never reach the full measure of power and influence. There is, what may be called,

the gristle period of the human body, the twig life of the tree. This period corresponds to that period of mind and character development when training is easy. When the gristle passes into the bone, and the twig into the bough, then it is difficult to correct or change or influence. So in mental and moral culture. The plastic period of youth is the time in which to imbed fundamentals, never to be forgotten or destroyed. The coin must not only pass current wherever it goes, but it must also bear an ineffaceable and abiding impress. So it is with personal character. Some things should be settled and fixed, to which we may cling and about which we may rally with positive assurance.

Then, there is also the strength that results from *continuous growth and advancement.* Life is evolutionary and progressive. Growth is its law and condition. No mental and spiritual life can become strong and vigorous without constant unfolding and expansion. St. Paul presents this thought of higher attainment in his counsel, "Not laying again the foundation, let us go on to perfection." That is, having obtained the rudiments, and firmly fixing the first principles, go on, not in the sense of cutting loose from them, but, while holding fast to them, leave them, as an edifice rises from its cornerstone toward completion, or as a tree, springing from its deep root, sends out its branches far and wide into the upper air.

There is great peril in being satisfied with present attainment and achievement. The one who says, "I know enough," "I have done enough," "I have come to the time when I will rest upon what I have accomplished," is standing upon a perilous footing. Such a spirit is fatal. It brings blight, declension, failure, death. Life itself is a school. Earth is a training place. Graduation is not completion. Furnishing is not finishing. Going from

the school-room is simply entering the great university of life, where we are to be students all our lives. Even heaven will be an ever-widening circle of knowledge and delight.

We gather rich lessons from the tree-life. The tree pushes on to the bud and then to its blossom; not satisfied with this, it presses on to fruitage, and does not cease its efforts until its immature fruit reaches perfection; even then the vigorous tree gathers up its forces and stores them away, in readiness for a larger fruitage the succeeding year.

Young people can have no greater reward for all the time, money, and energy they expend at college than the appreciation of this vital truth, that the achievements of to-day are but the prophecy of better things to-morrow; that present attainments are to serve as a foothold from which to take an advance step; that all mental and moral strength lies in the path of perpetual growth, and in the pressing on to more perfect things. Let our watchword, therefore, be "more and more," "better and better," "higher and higher," "climbing toward the summit," "going on to perfection," "pressing toward the prize"; running the whole race, until at last we pass through the golden gate into that temple not made with hands, where shall break upon us the glorious light of the "perfect day."

Another element of strength is the *power of a supreme purpose*. Every successful life is dominated with a sovereign motive. It is the keystone to the arch, the rudder to the ship, the driving wheel to the machinery, the throne to the kingdom. Men are weak for lack of a dominating thought, they are powerful when their life is girt about with a commanding purpose. Those who have no sacred, settled determination and high resolve with which to make their life noble and beautiful, drift out

upon the high seas of life, where the tides and currents and storms carry them hither and thither, until they are driven against some breaker that lies outside of the path of safety, and they go down into darkness and defeat, amid the shattered fragments of a drifting, aimless career. Impotent and unsatisfactory indeed is an indefinite, purposeless life.

After all, the great curse of life is desultoriness, a lack of aim, a failure to mark out a definite program for life. Life is a priceless treasure, and every youth ought to know what he is going to do with this treasure. Young people ought to study its perils, its possibilities, its sacredness, its opportunities, its responsibilities, and project into it a noble spirit, a governing force, an over-mastering passion. St. Paul illustrated this thought of the power of a supreme purpose in his own life, when he said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." And yet Paul was not a narrow, intolerant fanatic. He was broad, thoughtful, magnanimous. He did not mean that he was determined to be ignorant and unsymmetrical and out of joint with the times and the world in which he moved. He meant to say that he might know many other things, he might study botany, astronomy, geology, history, architecture, politics, physics, sociology, music, and many other things in the various departments of knowledge, but all these were to be subordinate to the one supreme determination of his life. In that way Paul became a giant leader. Filled with the inspiration of a high vision, under the force of a dominating thought, inspired with the victory of a lofty purpose, that young man of Tarsus was mighty and invincible. His very determination clothed him with a power that nothing could resist. The pressure of an over-mastering passion bore him on to victories which others had not achieved and to heights which they had never scaled.

So with the young man of Galilee. Jesus "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." His soul was gripped with life-purpose and his life was swept on by the force of a definite, mighty motive. At the age of twelve, that purpose shone in his eyes and burned into his tender heart. At thirty, he had a vision of his work. He knew full well his mission. At Jordan he felt the pressure of a high purpose, and from that time on he was under the baptism of a fire which burned and glowed and marked his path all along the way to Calvary and the cross until, at last, he exclaimed with triumph, "It is finished!" His life-purpose was attained in the redemption of a lost world. Amid all the thickening difficulties that gathered in his way, Jesus kept loyal to his purpose until the triumphant words rang out, "It is finished!" and he could say, "Father, I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do."

The world turns aside for a determined man, whether he sits in the chair of the chief executive of the nation, or rules in the lower walks of life.

When William Tell could not go through the narrow pass, cut in the face of a precipice in the Alps, because of the blowing gale against him, he lay down in the path and, with his face to his goal, he crawled to it.

It is easier to drift than it is to struggle to achieve. The aimless crowd often influences us to drift with it. Men say: "Why strive for the hilltops?" "Why scale the summits?" It costs to build up high manhood and womanhood, but it is worth while to pay the price and reach the goal.

He is a true hero and patriot who fulfills the conditions demanded of him in the hour of his country's need. There are battles now for us to wage—not military and physical, but moral, social, and religious. The battle of ideas and principles, real, fierce, significant; the battle

for social purity; the battle of capital and labor; the race problem; the problem of pauperism; the question of illiteracy; the Sabbath question; the American saloon; and the battle with lawlessness, anarchy, unrighteousness, infidelity, and low ideals—these all must be fought. They will require our best courage and truest heroism. We shall have to put our best manhood and womanhood into the conflict, if we would win the victories which the highest well-being of the Church and State demands.

We should not magnify the perils and dangers that beset our country, but we cannot build up good citizenship by closing our eyes to the diseased spots on our body politic. We dare not ignore the foes that threaten the very life of the State and the work of the Church. We must acquit ourselves like true men and women in a sleepless vigilance for all that is pure and righteous and worthy. An Englishman, making an after-dinner speech, said, "May our boys be pure and our girls be brave!" A friend, supposing he had blundered, whispered. "You mean to say, 'May our boys be brave and our girls pure.'" "No," he replied, "I mean what I said; our boys are sure to be brave and our girls pure." As a matter of fact, the best women have always been brave and heroic.

It may be true that we are all humbled by a knowledge of secret cowardice. We may be cowards by inheritance; if that be true, God means that we should be disciplined into courage. We should learn the virtue of courageous adventure. I suppose it is natural for us to shrink from conflict and risk, but, if we are to be true men and women, we must resist this disposition, this temptation. We must be willing to pay the price of progress and improvement. We must catch the meaning of Christ when he said, "He who would save his life, shall lose it, and he who would lose his life shall save it."

There have come crises in the lives of men that have made them great. They passed through the pain of decision. Some discipline in life compelled them either to go forward or go down; to leave the present position of ease, pleasure, and profit, for sacrifice, toil, and risk. But those very "turning points" made them great and immortal. It was so with Abraham, Moses, Daniel, Paul, Luther, Wesley, Otterbein, Carey, Judson, Lincoln, and others who have been distinguished for their leadership, and have wrought great achievement in life. Let us learn to say with the poet:

"Better to stem with heart and hand
The roaring tide of life, than be
Unmindful, on its flowery strand,
Of God's occasions drifting by.

"Better with naked nerve to bear
The needles of this goading care,
Than in the lap of sensual ease forego
The godlike power to do, the godlike power to know."

But, while the erection of the strong, massive pillars of personal character is desirable, there is also the other element of *moral beauty*. It is possible to have strength and yet fail in the graces that adorn personal character. Men may be anchored to great purposes and lofty conceptions, they may be strong in mental and moral grasp, and yet be wanting in those sweet, rich graces that give magnetism, charm, and influence to individual life.

There is nothing that adds so much to the loveliness of personal character as the grace of *service*. Jesus set this truth in words immortal when he said, "I came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister." We are not to serve self, but to serve others; and when we are ministered unto, it is with the view of helping others. The getting is for the purpose of giving. The receiver is in

turn to be the giver. Nothing is for itself alone. All things are made for others. Even the divine Father poured his own infinite love into the heart of his Son, that his Son might empty it, like an ocean, into the sad and drooping heart of humanity, to give it faith, hope, and enthusiasm. Serving others is life at its best. Every true life is altruistic.

Mary Magdalene, in the presence of Jesus, illustrated the beauty of a loving service. You say it was all sentiment. But the Savior accepted it. And that spikenard, that kiss, those tears are so many jewels that sparkle in her fadeless crown. Those spices which the women, in their devotion to Christ, brought to the sepulcher, have already filled the earth with their fragrance and beauty. Be assured that the brightest diadem that can adorn manhood and womanhood is the record of a life whose gifts and graces are devoted to the welfare and happiness of others. It may be counted the highest type of culture, if, in addition to the knowledge of Greek and Latin, history and mathematics, music and art, we have learned the higher lesson of an unselfish ministry. If we go forth from the home to the school-room, and from the school-room to the wider world, with the conviction that education is a sacred trust to be used for the good of mankind, not for selfish ends; that knowledge should be transmuted into power, and that power should be devoted to the advancement of purity, righteousness, truth, and civilization; and that the highest and noblest motive of every true life should be, not to rule, but to serve; not simply to enjoy, but to bless; not to dwell in idleness and luxury, but to be busy in all the worthy activities which enrich and bless the world; then even the angels of heaven will admire our characters and applaud our lives.

Then, there is also the grace of *heartiness,* which beautifies and adorns personal character and life. "What-

ever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men." In the small, as well as the great duties and spheres of life, there should be cheerfulness, radiance, enthusiasm in our life-work. The heart, as well as the brain, should be enlisted in service. Then graciousness will grow in the garden of the soul as one of the fairest flowers with which to make the life beautiful and attractive.

There are other heart sentiments and graces that embellish human character and beautify human life. They are the spontaneous outflow of a loving heart. They often rush forth from the depths of the soul without the asking. Gladstone, the "grand old man," used to romp and play with his grandchildren and abandon himself to their pleasure. The last public act of Henry Ward Beecher was after he had preached his sermon on Sabbath evening. As he started home he found two little waifs, outcasts, standing in the vestibule of his church, attracted by the music of the choir. And out of the fullness of his great heart, he put his arms about them, pressed them to his bosom, kissed their dirty cheeks, and pronounced a blessing upon those unfortunate wanderers, as they went out into the darkness of the night. President McKinley, when receiving news of his mother's illness, with tears streaming, wrote a telegram, saying, "Tell mother I am coming." When President Garfield, at his inauguration, turned and imprinted a kiss upon the brow of his aged mother, in the presence of the representatives of the whole world, it was a little act, but beautiful beyond all description. Her son's head had not become dizzy from distinction, and his grateful heart turned to the one to whom he was most indebted. It was the loveliness of a grace which led an honored son to pay the tenderest tribute of affection and homage to his aged mother, at

a time and place which test and reveal the rich and rare qualities of genuine manliness and nobility.

These are some of the heart flowers that need to be cultivated in the garden of the soul, so that it may give forth the sweetest fragrance and make the life charming and attractive.

So, in these times, when the currents and counter-currents of sin sweep hard against men, and the storms of temptation beat against them with such terrific fury that thousands of young men are swept off their feet and fall prostrate in sin and ruin, it is charming and beautiful to see a young man stand erect and alone in devotion to the right and fidelity to principle. Thank God for such men of colossal character and high heroism.

There is no more touching scene than that of Ruth, gleaning in the harvest fields of Bethlehem, in beautiful constancy gathering, behind the reapers, the handfuls of grain to be taken home to Naomi at eventide, and to be beaten out and used for her support. Ruth was a heroine. But there are just as inspiring scenes in our day. There are thousands of Ruths to-day battling with poverty, affliction, adversity, and orphanage, who are succeeding grandly. With hearts as pure, and lives as innocent, and spirits as Christlike as any that walk this broad earth, they are achieving victories for selfhood and girlhood.

Mary Clemmer tells of the heroism and fidelity of the distinguished Carey sisters. When Alice was thirty-two and Phœbe twenty-eight, they moved to the great city of New York. They rented two or three rooms in an unfashionable neighborhood, and set to work making their own living with their pen. Alice papered one room with her own hands, while Phœbe painted the doors and framed the pictures and brightened up the place. In a few years they moved to a pretty home on Twentieth

Street, but they still loved their humble, western home in southern Ohio, near College Hill. It is said, "They would would often sit in their city home in New York, with blinds closed, then shut their eyes and listen until they thought they could hear the rustle of the cherry tree on the old roof, and smell the sweetbrier under the window."

A few years ago I visited the old Carey homestead, called "Clovernook," near College Hill, and when within those walls, I, remembering what those orphan girls had achieved and written and become, thought, here within these quaint walls, were born two worthy sisters, brave spirits, noble heroines, who, through orphanage and poverty and sorrow, triumphed in life, became immortal in song, and then went to that better country, where pure, noble, exalted, Christian womanhood is crowned forever. Fidelity is its own reward, and from its altar ascends the sweetest incense unto God.

Be assured that no life can have this combination of strength and beauty without the presence and influence of Jesus Christ in that life. Christ is the great master-builder. He, alone, can erect the massive pillars of truth and righteousness, and embellish them with the lilywork of purity, sympathy, and love. Ah, if we would but let Christ take our lives and adorn them with his virtues and graces, how beautiful they would be!

THE DIVINE IDEAL OF THE CHURCH.

The church is the mystical body of Christ. All the redeemed, taken together, constitute his body. Each believer is a separate, yet component, part of that body. Just as each member constitutes a part of the entire physical mechanism, so each believer is a component part of Christ's spiritual body.

Paul, the master mind, sets forth the divine conception of the church of Christ under this striking figure of the human body. In Colossians 1 : 18, he describes Christ as being the head of the body, the church. In Romans 12 : 5, he shows that the church has many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, but being many, they are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. In Ephesians 4 : 15, 16, he speaks of the organic unity, the structural completeness of the church, and shows how it may grow up in Christ, the head of the church, "from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." In I. Corinthians 12 : 27, he declares the vital structural unity of the church in Christ. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

The apostle builds a strong argument in favor of the unity and co-operative power of the church, including the element of efficiency, suggesting certain elements of power and efficiency.

Organization. The symbol of the human body, as we know its nature and workings, naturally suggests organic unity, structural completeness, spiritual vigor, and self-propulsion. But in no sense is the mystical body of Christ material; it is purely spiritual in its life union with Christ,

the head, and yet the church has visibility. The mystical presence and life of Christ resides in each believer, and operates through human personality. In other words, the outward expression of the Christ-life in the church has tangibility and definite form, adapting it to human administration and needs.

The church meets a universal demand for organization and discipline. No movement can be strong and successful without organization back of it. The church is Christ's kingdom on earth, and every Christian is supposed to be in the church, and in his assigned place of service and responsibility.

In the deepest sense, the church is a living organism. It is not an accumulation, but an evolution from Christ, its divine life. It is not an accretion, but a growth from Christ and in Christ. All the members are bound together by the cohesive power of the Christ-life in each one, giving order, fitness, symmetry. The divine ideal is that each member should be in his proper place, doing his work in his own way, in harmony with the rule and direction of the head, no one seeking to do the work of another, nor interfering with the work of another. When this divine idea and ideal is actualized fully in the church, what a power it will be!

As local churches work toward this ideal, certain results will follow.

Unity. The unification of the forces of the church will prevent friction, clashing, dissension, misdirected and divisive effort, and wasted energy.

The need of the times is denominational unity and co-operation. Denominational discord is sinful. The darkest blotch upon Christendom is the bitter contentions of the church divisions over dogmatic statements, doctrinal differences, and credal enunciations. Proselytism, denominational pride, and that Phariseeism which

boasts of mere numbers and disparages others, are elements of weakness in the visible body of Christ. The sight of a man whose physical members are opposing and maiming one another, would be strong evidence of a case of insanity. No less insane is it when members of the body of Christ clash and injure one another, neutralizing one another's efforts and enterprises. It may be necessary for the church to be broken up into many denominational divisions, nevertheless sectarianism is an evil. It never builds up the kingdom of God. It lends its influence to the propagation of denominationalism rather than Christianity. Paul saw the need of Christian co-operation and federation, and placed a strong emphasis upon the need of vital union with Christ, and therefore of the underlying unity of all who are in Christ. Beautiful is the church when all the members of the body of Christ are under the one program of Christ for the advancement of the kingdom of God in the earth. With this complete unification of the church forces, there will be no waste of denominational machinery, nor dissipation of energy by friction, nor lack of co-operation and fellowship. A continent of work is yet before the church, in order to attain this desirable goal, the ideal of Paul.

Development. The church of to-day is far below its maximum of strength and efficiency, because much of its force, both in the ministry and the laity, is dormant and unused. Paul says that the whole organization of the church is intended for the edifying of the body of Christ. Christ called into use all the talents of its personality. "He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the meas-

ure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." This development of the church, the filling out to symmetry, is the work and problem of the church leaders.

The church is also an educational institution, to train and discipline its members into increasing strength and efficiency. Hence, religious education has become an important factor in the life of the present-day church. The church is not only a saving station, but also a training school for proper ideals, and for efficient, well-directed service.

Enrichment. The church is rich in its varied gifts, talents, and attainments. Philosophers, musicians, poets, historians, jurists, theologians, statesmen, scientists, reformers, missionaries, educators, artists contribute to her wealth, prestige, and power. The church is the grandest organization under the sun, and through wise direction and proper education may become still more the uplifting, transforming, educative, redemptive agency for the world's betterment, commensurate with Paul's ideal of the mission of the church. Surely the task of the church leaders is to develop and train the varied and united forces of that body to their maximum of efficiency and power.

Vitality. External organization is an element of power, but it is not sufficient. The church body must have life. A poor, useless thing is a lifeless body. A church without vitality and spirit is a cumbrous thing. It enlarges by accretions rather than by the expansion of its inner life. Paul's idea of the church is that it must have life within to give it the power of self-maintenance and self-extension. The problem of the church is constantly and ever to keep its normal spiritual health. Rich, vigorous life should flow through every vein of the body, giving it growth, radiance, aggressiveness, and increasing stature. First of all, there must be the implanting of

divine life through the miracle of regeneration, and then there must be care in nourishing and developing that life into a strong normal state which expresses itself in broad, continuous, unremitting activity, in performing heroic tasks, befitting the church of Christ.

Unless there is vigorous spiritual life in the body, there will surely come seasons of fluctuation, decline, and loss of power of conquest. Dynamic would be the church of God, if all her veins were full of rich, red blood, and her entire body were pulsating with the fullness of the life from above.

Underneath all church organization, machinery, plans, and finances, lies the need of a rich, inner, spiritual life, an abounding, victorious, divine life flowing through the channel of consecrated personality. This is the only solution to the individual, domestic, social, national, and church problems of our day. Paul announces the possibility of such realization and experience in his prayer, that each believer might be filled with all the fullness of God and know the love of Christ which passeth all knowledge.

Individuality. The church is the grandest organization in this world for the fostering of personal character. In its communion ample opportunity is given for the recognition and use of all talents, tastes, and gifts. It lays its hand upon a diversity of gifts. It encourages Christian literature, music, art, the use of wealth, princely benefactions, and heroic service at home and abroad.

The apostolic church and the early Christians were a glorious band of workers. They were martyr witnesses for Christ, and were under the evident leadership of the Holy Spirit, but, behold what the church of Christ has grown into during the Christian centuries! A great educational institution is the modern church. Her diversity of gifts put into use; her talents discovered and de-

veloped into efficiency and power; her wealth of numbers, genius, voices, hands, eyes, lips, feet, brains, consecrated to the God-given mission of pouring its treasures into this hungry, needy, famishing world—this is the church to-day. All are under command. No one is excused, no one neglected or passed by. The humblest one is a worthy unit. All personalities are enlisted; all talents, employed; all gifts, paying tribute. Each one is in his proper place on the program; each, filling his niche; each, retaining his distinct individuality and becoming an important unit in the general activities and movements of the kingdom. In the modern church there is a distinct place for the children, who are already a mighty army, marching under the banner of the cross, and who are in training for a mighty future church.

Relationship. Each member of the church is related to every other member in the communion. Each one is bound to the other by the cohesive power of divine love. God has put into every true believer the filial cry, "Father!" The moment the soul is recreated, its natural cry is, "Abba, Father!" This common spiritual Fatherhood brings all his children into a spiritual brotherhood. In this relation there are the elements of interdependence, helpfulness, and affection. Two of the greatest words in the English language are "love" and "helpfulness." Love is the crowning glory of Christianity. It is the badge of Christian fellowship. But it must show itself in helpfulness. Every one who enters the church has a right to feel that he is going into a higher atmosphere than that from which he has come.

He has a right to feel that he is entering a brotherhood where kindness, charity, and goodwill prevail. Every church should make all its members, even the humblest and weakest, the objects of kindly thought and consideration. Not, perhaps, in form and administration, but in

spirit and fellowship, the modern church should be a reproduction of the apostolic church, with increased intelligent, Christ-like emphasis. "Be kindly affectionate one to another." "In honor preferring one another." "In love serve one another." "Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another." "Bear ye one another's burdens." "Pray for one another, and receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God."

Paul not only gives the divine ideal of the church, but he also announces its divinity. It is both the product and object of divine love. It is founded upon Christ, the Rock of Ages, and has omnipotence and invincibility. The history of its struggles, persecutions, fortunes, and achievements attests its divinity. No other power but Almighty God could have carried the hated and opposed church through the centuries to its present triumph and influence. The fact that God is with it and that Christ is its Head and King, is the secret of its invincibility. Paul declares that the church is glorious now, with all its imperfection and incompleteness on the human side. It is in process of growth towards the divine ideal. Its evolution is progressive, expanding, and upward. Its foundation, power, growth, and ever-enlarging empire make it glorious and inspiring. Christ loves the church as his bride, and will lead it to its final, sublime destiny. He sanctifies and cleanses it and clothes it with the garment of holiness in preparation to meet him in the great "marriage feast of the Lamb," that he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish. The church will then be the finished product and crowning glory of his redemptive love.

AMERICA FOR CHRIST.

America is the child of Providence. No one can read the story of Columbus and the Pilgrim Fathers without feeling that they were under divine guidance. Evidently the hand of Providence directed Columbus to the new continent, and under Providence Protestant faith was planted at Jamestown in 1607, at Plymouth Rock in 1620, and along the shores of the Carolinas. Who can doubt that Washington at midnight in a grove of prayer, more than Washington on the battlefield, was used of God to secure freedom to this nation. God, who is the God of nations as well as of individuals, evidently chose the leadership of this nation to carry out his purpose. This is the philosophy and lesson of history.

The idea of God was incorporated in the thought-life of this nation, even if it were not put into the constitution in formal words. The recognition of God became a part of the organic law. The government is not simply the fruit of a human compact. Back of it is the purpose of Almighty God. The great truths that gave our nation being, were God-inspired. Civil and religious liberty, equality, justice, and human rights, divine principles that entered into the warp and woof of our national life, were not only gathered from the Word of God, but were sealed with the blood of the bravest men that ever went to battle.

Even our national flag and national coin have sacred significance. In the seven European countries I visited, no emblem was so beautiful to me as the Stars and Stripes, because it stands for the germinal elements of the Republic. The inscription on our national coin, "In God We Trust," is befitting to us who honor God as the God of nations.

A few years ago, the author saw in Sweden, on the Fourth of July, in the presence of ten thousand people, our flag entwined around the Swedish emblem, and the sight of it stirred his heart and brought tears to his eyes. Our flag means much to a tourist far away from home. And at home, nothing is so beautiful and inspiring as our flag entwined around the banner of the cross, which proclaims the elements of our greatness and glory.

The belief in our "manifest destiny" and the conviction that this nation is a child of Providence, are the source and inspiration of its greatest strength and truest patriotism. While other nations believe in the divine right of kings, we believe in the divine right of men. We glory in our democracy. God created all men free and equal.

America has a *rich heritage*. She inherited a splendid type of manhood. Her early settlers possessed granite character. Her colonial stock had noble, red blood. They incarnated ideas and principles that became our national heritage and the germinal elements of our national life. We must never outlive these fundamentals if we would perpetuate our nation. The power of self-government that inheres in these eternal truths must be preserved and maintained, that we may withstand the tremendous strain of inimical influences both within and without our borders.

America's riches are in her manhood, in the intelligence and morality of her citizens. Pericles once said, "Men, not walls, make a city." So men, not things, make a nation. The Sultan of Turkey once asked the late President Angell whether he could buy such guns as Admiral Dewey used at Manila. He replied, "Yes, but what you cannot buy are the men behind the guns." We have reason to thank God that the personal elements that entered into the foundation of our nation's fabric were

from northern Europe. They were predominantly Christian, and of the better class.

America inherited a *vast domain.* Its extent and resources are marvelous. The United States has an area of two million seventy thousand square miles, and has productive land enough to feed nine hundred million people. Beyond the Mississippi lies two-thirds of our national domain, equal in size to three hundred and fifty-one States the size of Massachusetts. Minnesota and North Dakota are larger than Great Britain. Only three of the twenty-two States west of the Mississippi are as small as New England. Texas is an empire in itself. If the island of Cuba, as Columbus imagined, had been the extent of the prize of his discovery, rather than this immense territorial domain, the present teeming, growing, mighty America would have been an impossibility. One has well said, "When Columbus imagined he was entering the back door of Asia, he was really entering the front door of America."

Dr. Paul Douglass gives a charming description of the beauty and richness of our land. "The white birches silhouetted against the dark hemlocks of New England hillside; the tender, little, creeping greenery, delicately embroidering the feet of the Adirondack forest; the meeting of rugged highlands and misty marshes at the nation's greatest gateway, and the mighty stretch of reddening sunrise over the waving marsh grasses up and down all our costal plain; the widespread shade of live oaks draped with Spanish moss, equally stir and engage the affection of one whose parish is the nation. The lapping, deep-green waters of the Great Lakes; the dotting farms and forests of the interior, wreathed in the smoke of factory chimneys; the steep bridle paths of the Southern Appalachians, winding under majestic chestnut and mighty beech; the smiling cotton fields of Southern up-

lands, and plains enclosed in a framework of pine tree and vine—all are the familiar furnishing of home to one who lives wherever the flag flies.

"The shimmer of sunlight over the prairie; the rich, yellow wheat, ripe for the harvest; the smoking gray of the new-turned sod; and then the high plains southward over ranch and mine, to where against the serrated background of mountains, the cactus towers, as sandlike pillars in the ruins of Karnak, and the day-long mirage mocks one day by day—each has a mystic compulsion over the heart of one who knows all.

"From the white peaks of the farther Rockies; from the Cascades forested somberly by the firs; from the stark grandeur of the high Sierras to the virile beauty of the Golden Gate and the smiling gardens and orchards slumbering in the mellow light between the foothills and the unutterably white surf of the Pacific—our land is goodly to know and to call ours."

America has *abounding possibilities*. Our natural resources are marvelous. Our productiveness is still more wonderful. American genius and enterprise have laid hold of our natural resources and developed them to astonishing results and possessions. The wealth of this country is phenomenal. We are the richest nation in the world, counting the treasures under the earth and on its surface. Our wealth now exceeds the wealth of Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, Mexico, and British Columbia, and yet we have just begun to come to our own. God seems to have stored away in our fields, prairies, valleys, mountains, and forests untold treasures for a great western empire, whose elements of life and power should pass into a mighty, influential, commanding civilization.

Our opportunities are as wide as our domain. Our responsibilities are as great as our task to create a distinct, colossal, aggressive, Christian civilization that shall set an

example to the whole world as to what the divine ideal of the Christian state should be, its citizens walking in the will of God, and following high moral, social, and ethical ideals. If the wealth of personality and of material possessions in this country was consecrated and let loose for God and humanity, America and the world could be evangelized in this generation. What wonderful possibilities lie before the Christian church to-day!

A wonderful thing it is to live in this day, even with all its disturbed relations, war, hatred, drunkenness, and desolations, resulting from commercial vice and corporate greed and conspiracies. There is such a splendid chance now to show one's heroism and good citizenship in standing for and promoting righteousness and justice in moral, civic, and commercial life.

God has set before us an open door. Who can shut it, who dare shut it in the face of his providence and will? God is still on his throne. His eye is still on our nation.

Who knoweth whether we have not come at such a time as this? Who can interpret these stirring times in the breaking up and the travail of the nations, as they seem to fulfill divine prophecy? May it not be that in God's providence, America will play her part in completing the task of a new world civilization? God help the President, the Congressmen, and all Christian leaders within our borders to put themselves in his hands, willing that he shall lay hold of our marvelous resources and lead in the working out of our national possibilities to a great national destiny.

America also has its perils. The influx of foreign population is one of our greatest national problems. It menaces our American life and institutions. Millions of all races, classes, conditions, creeds, and religions pour upon our shores. The cities are the congested objective points of immigration. Even in the sparsely-settled dis-

tricts these foreign elements plant themselves in colonies that are non-Protestant and often Christless. They are without any knowledge of our self-government or our free institutions, and most of them are in the bondage of foreign prejudice. Our large cities are the danger centers. They are a babel of tongues. They are the social swamps that generate the miasma of vice, anarchy, and mobocracy. These influencing centers are filled with heterogeneous, vicious peoples, most of whom are still under the grip of religious prejudice, saturated with infidelity, cursed with alcoholism, and dominated by foreign thoughts wholly at variance with American ideas and customs.

Then, there is also the *peril of many faiths.* Perhaps no other country is beset with so many kinds of beliefs as this. Mohammedanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Brahmanism, and Judaism are all found here in modern form. The astonishing thing is that these five religions find adherents with increasing numbers in this country. Then the statistics show that three-fifths of our entire population, numbering about sixty millions, have no church relation whatever. These millions make up the great mass of the unchurched and irreligious classes. The non-Christian faiths in this land have a tendency to draw men away from Christ and Christianity, and weaken a reverential faith in the true God. The thousands that are carried away with strange doctrines invest the whole problem of home missions with unusual seriousness.

Back of all of our national problems is the fundamental question, whether Christianity is not their only solution. The enthronement of Jesus Christ in individual, social, industrial, educational, political, and religious life, and the recognition of one Lord, one faith, and one baptism in the unity of a common faith, is as desirable in this republic as it was in the Hebrew commonwealth.

Hence, I conclude that the Christian church must proclaim and defend the "faith once delivered unto the saints."

Another peril is the *lust of greed.* This nation is running mad for gain. The fortunes of war have made men and corporations wild with desire for lucre. This mad rush for wealth expresses itself in low ideals in social, business, and national life. It discounts patriotism, winks at lawlessness, and sells its birthright for a mess of pottage. A tremendous crisis is on, whether we admit it or not. It is, whether the material shall triumph over the spiritual and moral. Think of it! For the paltry dollar, ammunition is made to shoot down our fellowmen. For the paltry dollar, the saloon and brothel grind out boys into outlaws, criminals, and vagabonds, with not yet enough sentiment and law to eliminate these evils from our Christian civilization and remove the stain from our flag.

But greatly as these perils strain our national life and institutions, I do not despair. I take the wings of faith and make the prophecy, that when the Christian people of this country come to assert themselves in the use of all the resources at their command, these perils will be overcome and removed, under the power of our matchless Christ.

What are the forces that will save America and conserve her national life?

The *religious education of our youth* is a necessity. The ratio of illiteracy in the United States is being reduced, but it is far too high in some sections. We are chagrined to know that popular ignorance is far greater than it is in certain European countries. This is a menace. Universal education is the ideal for this nation. We must educate or perish.

But these ideals will not reach their true height without religious education. The religious and spiritual must be supreme in the midst of the material. This is the verdict of history.

Our youth must be trained in the elements of Christian citizenship. Home training is necessary to give the children proper ideals of American life. Home-building must produce a good product. The home is the preserving unit of the nation. It must be under the constructive influence of religious life and culture.

Religious education has respect, also, to the law of environment. Physical, social, and moral conditions are made better through proper education. Information concerning the nature and results of the evils of society awakens sentiment for change and improvement. The children in the home, school, and church must be trained in moral conduct and religious convictions. They must be shown, through scientific instruction, the nature and effects of alcohol, the physical curses of the social evil, and the deterioriating influence of untoward environment. Evil social customs and organized iniquities intrenched in sentiment and law must be changed through proper religious education.

The laws and ideals of the Christian state must be made to help men live a good life and exert a wholesome influence. The religious education of the youth is the supreme problem of the times. Neither the Church nor the State dare ignore or neglect it.

Christian patriotism is another conserving force of the nation. We need an exalted patriotism that is more than sentiment, something that lasts longer than a Fourth of July oration. We need a love for country that rises above the dollar or predatory gain. The heterogeneous elements that now exist must become homogeneous and contribute to the strength and richness of American citizen-

ship and American life. These diverse elements that are the peril and problem of the nation, must be Americanized and baptized with the spirit of high patriotism.

Our greatest battles are not with swords, but with ideas and principles. The issue is not so much whether we shall mobilize military forces and increase our naval armament, but whether our flag stands for human liberty, human brotherhood, and national righteousness. This high purpose appeals to true loyalty and constructive statesmanship.

The hope of America to fulfill the day-dream of its founders, and to reach the ideals that point to her true destiny, is in the *power and influence of Protestant Christianity.*

The history of Christendom proves the superior value of Protestant Christianity. Its superiority in relation to individual and national life, has been tested through the Christian centuries. Out of the darkness of the Middle Ages it came forth with the light of truth upon its brow. No other religion or sect has met the needs of humanity. All other religions have missed the idea and conception of universal brotherhood and kinship in Jesus Christ. Protestant Christianity alone wears the crown.

A responsibility beyond that of the past rests upon American Protestantism. The forces that will save us as a nation are the spiritual dynamics of Christianity. The great need of the times is a spiritual, aggressive, triumphant Christianity, touching all the relations and departments of human life and activity. Our diversified population must be leavened with the leaven of the gospel. The old Galilean gospel must be tremendously emphasized in the old communities, and carried speedily into the new regions. God help us to turn down the new panaceas for sin, and present the old message of salvation with pentecostal power! Men need to hear an optimistic

message from the lips of every preacher, layman, Sunday-school teacher, and Christian worker, in every nook and corner of this land. There is hope for all men in Jesus Christ. Let us carry the good news to them. God saves by faith in Christ.

If I did not believe that the poor drunkard, yonder in the gutter; that the erring girl, broken-hearted over her shame; that the wandering boy, crushed and beggared under his vicious habits; that the hungry, starving wife up yonder in the attic; that the orphan left motherless by sin; that any one who utters the cry of faith, could be saved in Jesus Christ, I would not preach the gospel a moment longer. Thank God! the One who made us can remake us, put life currents in our veins, and put songs of eternal life on our lips. Whosoever will say "Yes" to God can be changed into spiritual childship and be transfigured into Christlikeness.

The problem of the home mission and the church extension propaganda is twofold:

Our cities must be under the dominating influence of Christianity or they will go down under the weight of their own vices. Without Christ, they are doomed to decadence and inevitable ruin. They cannot be cured of their maladies, unless Christ's virtue enters into their veins and cleanses away the poison.

Our cities are the receptacles of the personality of country communities, constantly flowing in, to be made better or worse—to be moulded into strong, sturdy citizenship, or to make up the danger elements that imperil the nation.

Home missions makes a mighty appeal to the patriotism and generosity of every true American citizen. The spirit of home missions is the very best constructive statesmanship, and makes the church one of the chief factors in our American social and political life. There is

no other propaganda in this country to-day equal in value and power to the propaganda of home missions in planting the kingdom of God in American soil.

One word about the *denominational sects*. They are inevitable in the history and *esprit de crops* of denominations. As so many divisions of the church of Christ, they do great good. There seems to be no way to avoid the breaking up of the church into various divisions. But in their propaganda, they must be patriotic rather than sectarian. There should be such unity of spirit and alignment of the Christian forces that the goal of their united effort shall be a Christian nation, in which Christ is the spiritual head and king. This is the thought and aim of the Federal Council of Churches of America.

Above everything else, God, Christ, the Bible, Christian character, fellowship, and co-operation stand supreme. The Christian church, broken up into many different denominations, tends to division and weakness, but the spirit of Christian unity must encompass the national life with increasing solidarity of interest and co-operation.

We are living in a time when the *God-consciousness* seems to be too lightly felt. The face of God is clearly seen in our pioneer history, but the vision of his face seems to be dimmed in the rush and struggle of our luxurious social and commercial life. Hence, men are liable to forget the fact and hand of God in human affairs.

In my boyhood days, I studied and saw the hand of God in American history. From that time until now, I have believed that God shapes the destiny of nations in his own good time. I believe that God is still in the march of true progress. He is the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

We hear much about pure *democracy and human brotherhood.* These must be conserved. But our destiny can be worked out only through regeneration. And this regeneration will not come simply through human social evolution, but rather through the social realization of Christianity, as it enters into every fiber of our American fabric. The hope of our country is not in human devices, but in the ministry of the church, in the broader application of the mission of Christ; not in the worldly politician, but in the Christian statesman; not in mere political philosophy, but in Christian principles incarnated in broad, patriotic citizenship.

I believe that God intends America to be an example of what Christianity can do for a nation, and that it shall be the base of supplies and beacon light to all nations, that it shall have the preserving salt of the gospel, and be a candlestick set on a hill, shedding light to those round about it.

It is said that Napoleon once asked his sculptor how long his best statue could endure. The artist replied, "Protected, and kept from accident, possibly six thousand years." Walking away, Napoleon said, "That will not do. I must have something that will last longer than that." Such fame would be too short-lived.

The call of Christ to the home church is to see that America shall continue to hold to the enduring elements of its life, and work out a glorious destiny in harmony with the will of God. Do you not hear the voice of Christ's loud appeal to the church, to give herself to the social and spiritual redemption of this good land of ours, in this day and generation? Can you not hear his sweet voice, "Lift up your eyes and behold the fields white to the harvest"?

I would not be an extravagant optimist, but I take the wings of faith and believe that a great future awaits

us as a nation, that out of our disturbed relations, vice, drunkenness, war, and our mixed civilization, blotched with iniquity, we shall come to our true place as a nation, in the hands of God and the church. If the church will arise to her full strength, release her resources that belong to God, and give the old gospel a good chance, and if the church's eyes, and feet, and mouth, and hands are employed to achieve the victories of human redemption, then a new day will dawn upon us, when America will be in truth a Christian nation, the channel of God's saving grace to the whole world.

THE WORLD FOR CHRIST.

The Acts of the Apostles is the history of Christian missions as inaugurated in the early church. It shows that the personal ministry of Jesus did not cease with his ascension. His enthronement as mediatorial king, enabled him, through the administration of the Holy Spirit, to carry forward with increasing power and rapidity the same work which he inaugurated on earth. Dr. O. E. Brown truly says, "The aim of missions is no less than the creation of a renewed humanity out of the ruined humanity of the Christless nations; the creation of a new humanity which shall be not only redeemed, but redemptive, which shall not only share in his redemptive power, but in that of reproducing his sonship in the souls of others. The single aim of missions thus takes on a twofold aspect, one looking toward personal redemption, and the other toward social redemption."

The Book of Acts describes the founding of the Christian church and gives the program of Jesus for worldwide conquest. It marks out a campaign that is to continue until the last man shall be reached.

The charter members of the church were the nucleus of a new society that was charged with the task of carrying the gospel to the ends of the earth. The story in Acts shows conspicuously that the risen Christ, enthroned on high, is the world Savior, and worthy of world leadership.

We do not start right in missions unless we start with the fact that the *missionary idea is supernatural.* It is God's great thought for the world's recovery. It is a divine plan, thought out in eternity and wrought out in time. It is not a human invention, but a divine revelation. Nothing less than a worldwide religion is worthy of our

God. A work so stupendous and sublime alone is commensurate with the God's greatness and infinite love.

The plan of Christ is both divine and universal. His horizon reaches to the outer rim of the earth and to the last man in the earth. Jesus knew where to place the emphasis. "God so loved the world"; "unto all people"; "among all nations"; "to every creature"; "to the uttermost parts of the earth." His command is limitless and his purpose boundless. It is a challenge to every Christian and every church.

The words of Christ on the mount have a present voice. He does not say, "Ye are the light of the church," but, "Ye are the light of the world"; not, "Ye are the salt of the church," but "the salt of the earth."

Now, if Jesus is the world Savior, then he must have though out and announced a world program. Otherwise there would be a reflection upon his intelligence and integrity, and his leadership would be discounted. The missionary enterprise is undergirded with a divine plan. This is its inspiration and strength—it is according to the divine will. And every Christian, without a single exception, is under the authority of the divine commission. This is the Bible conception of Christian missions. If we believe the Word of God, we must believe in world evangelization, and get under, with both shoulders, the Christian plan for the recovery of humanity.

What is Christ's plan for his church in world evangelization?

Christ means that the *church shall announce and teach this world-purpose with uninterrupted fidelity.* From the moment the church saw his outstretched hands and heard, first-hand from his lips, this world-message, she was never to cease its promulgation. It was to be carried through the weary centuries with heroic persistency.

It became a part of the thought-life of the early church. And it must be the thought-life of the church to-day. This missionary idea must never decline or die out. Paul took it up from Jesus and carried it to the Gentile world.

And what an inspiration is Paul's example! He had such a passion to save the world that his obligation grew out of his opportunity. He said, "Woe is me, if I preach not the message to those who need it." Rome needed it, and Rome was his opportunity. That put him under a great "must." "I must go to Rome." "I am a debtor to the Gentiles, and cannot rest until I discharge my obligation. If necessary, take me to Rome in chains, so that I may tell them of Christ." That is love; that is the loyalty of love, the constraining power of love.

"Your love has a broken wing, if it cannot fly across the ocean," once said Doctor Babcock. So Christ says to-day to any church or Christian, "I have somewhat against you; you have lost your first love, if you do not sound out constantly the note of salvation for the last man beyond the sea, in China, Africa, Korea, Japan, to the Greek, Barbarian, and Jew, in every corner of the earth." There should be written in letters of fire over every church the words, "Go" and "Lo"—"Go, teach all nations," and "Lo! I am with you."

More and more I am convinced of the need of missionary education in our home churches. Inspiration is not enough. The people perish for lack of knowledge. They need information concerning the situation in heathen lands. The rank and file of the membership do not know the needs of the foreign field, and hence they are indifferent, and meager in their support. Thousands give nothing whatever to carry out Christ's world program and satisfy his heart thirst for souls.

Missionary education, through mission study classes and periodical literature, is the need of the hour. Through the Sunday school and the pulpit, it ought to be burned into the souls of the people, so that all Christians shall recognize the claims of God and their obligation to their fellowmen.

Then, Christ means that the *Church must announce her belief in the possibility of the world's evangelization.* The great European war has raised doubt in the minds of some about Christianity and Christian missions. The deadly conflict between Christian nations raises a question as to the final triumphant outcome of Christianity. Will Christ's promise of the salvation of the world ever be fulfilled? Is it worth while to prosecute foreign missions? Are they not a failure? But God is still on his throne, and he rules for good results.

The church that represents Jesus Christ must be sincere in its belief in what Christ commands. It must go further than that; it must enthusiastically announce that belief. We must believe what we preach and teach about missions. It is a question of obedience to God. We are so used to that word "obedience" that it does not mean much to many church members. The great need is an obedience that gets under the great commission and takes in its spirit, an obedience of love, love to Christ and love to humanity, love to all men on the face of the earth.

We dare not tamper with God's command. We must not play with missions. We must believe in the integrity of God and his ability to consummate his purposes. We must believe in the adequacy of Christianity to meet the world's needs. Neither war, nor infidelity, nor organized evil, nor the conspiracy of nations can thwart the will and purpose of Almighty God. What we need is to believe that God will finally evangelize this world through his church, and to act as though we believed it.

We have everything to inspire this faith. Think of the improved facilities that lend aid to increased missionary achievements; the factors of transportation, communication, Christian schools, immense circulation of the Scriptures, medical science, and the aid of Christian governments. These are all powerful contributors to missionary progress. Think, too, of the increased church membership, numbering millions, of our greater intelligence, and of the enormous resources, provided by the blessing of God. God's gift of his Son was not a blunder, else he stands impeached. The final redemption of this world through Jesus Christ is the only rational explanation of divine creation and divine love.

Christ's promises are "Yea and amen." His veracity is at stake. His character is involved. His power is challenged. All omnipotence on the divine side and all the resources on the human side are the unanswerable argument for the possibility of world evangelization. Do we all believe that? "According to your faith so shall it be unto you."

Christ's plan is that the *church shall be his instrument and servant in the world's evangelization.* Paul uses a striking figure of the church. He calls it the body of Christ, and then declares that every member of that body should serve him. Christ's plan includes the totality of our being—heart, hands, eyes, lips, brain, feet—in service to fulfill his mission. The world is to be evangelized through the ministry of the church. This will be accomplished through a united, consecrated church, every member of which is a related unit in the enterprise.

What are the elements of high efficiency for carrying out Christ's missionary program?

First, *Pentecostal preparation.* Jesus presented two things to his disciples. First, Take my commission, obey my orders. Second, Tarry until you get power to carry

them out. The keynote of Christianity is pentecostal power. This is obtained when we pay the price. Men pay the price of power in everything else. Christ says that if you want power, pay the price of waiting surrender to the will of God. Tarry ye until ye receive power from on high. The church to-day is not better than the apostolic church. It needed pentecostal gifts, and we, also, need such preparation for the tasks before us. Our strength does not lie in the mechanics but the dynamics of Christianity; not simply in organization and machinery, but in spiritual power.

As Jesus went away from his disciples, he asked them to tarry until they should receive power from on high. And the moment they received that preparation they were changed men, remade, going forth and turning the world upside down. The same results are seen to-day. We have known persons who did not believe in evangelism, in home or foreign missions. They were good people, but they moved on a low plane of vision and experience. As soon as they felt the magic touch of the risen Christ, they were revolutionized, lifted up to the highlands of childship, their whole being illuminated, transfigured, and transformed into men and women all ablaze with the fire of the Christ passion. After that, what workers in the church! What prayers! What givers! What believers in Christian missions at home and abroad! Heroically they selected and supported their own native missionary in the foreign field. Their princely offerings were as a crown upon the radiant brow of their Savior and King, and they rejoiced with exceeding joy that they were permitted to be partners with Jesus Christ in the greatest enterprise in the universe.

Another factor in world evangelization is prayer. This is what Jesus meant by the word, "tarry." It means separation, waiting, expectancy, communion. Power

comes through prayer. Its use is accompanied with prayer. It is even lost without the habit and spirit of prayer. A prayerless life is powerless. Prayer mixed with faith is the ladder down which divine blessing and power descend to the believer. All our moral victories hinge on prayer.

If we need workers, Jesus tells us to give ourselves to intercession. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he send forth laborers." If we need heroic giving, prayer will reach God's people by way of the throne. One great need to-day is the recognition of our priesthood unto God. Robert E. Speer tells it in a few words: "The evangelization of the world in this generation depends, first of all, upon a revival of prayer. Deeper than the need of men; deeper far than the need of money; aye, deep down at the bottom of our spiritless life is the need for the forgotten secret of prevailing, world-wide prayer. . . . The condition and consequence of such prayers as this is a new outpouring of the Holy Ghost. . . . Nothing short of this new outpouring will ever solve the missionary problems of our day."

We may be sure that when the church intrenches herself into the prayer life of Christ, then her power will be multiplied, and her treasuries will be filled. There will be no retrenchment of money and workers. Those who are waiting will be able to go, and the mighty march of God's kingdom into the benighted lands of the earth will be accelerated.

O God, make us all kings and priests unto thee, so that we shall be giant-like in thy hands to do thy holy will!

Then, *Christ's plan includes a witnessing church.* This is his statement. It is an ever-expanding work, proceeding in ever-enlarging circles. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, in Jerusalem [that is, the local home church], in

Judea [that means outside of your own church at home], in Samaria [that means foreigners that are not in sympathy with you], and to the uttermost parts of the earth [that means the last man on the earth]." "Go ye into all the world and witness unto me," "And, lo! I am with you alway." The logical question is, How can the Lord go with us unless we go ourselves?

Last words are always impressive. Jesus had gone to Calvary, into the tomb, and had risen in triumph. He had taught his disciples for forty days, and then led them to the mountainside to speak the last word. It was the supreme moment. One more word, the greatest of all, was to be spoken before he took his flight to the throne. Here it is, "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses." Literally, "Ye shall be my martyrs." In other words, to build up my kingdom in the earth will require sacrifice. We must stand for the truth and be ready to suffer for it.

Truth has always had to suffer in order to make progress. The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church. That is true now. Jesus wore a crown of thorns for the truth's sake, and now truth often must wear the crown of thorns on its way to coronation. Dr. F. E. Clark tells how he saw Horace Pitkin just before the Boxer insurrection, as he stood on the platform of a railroad station, waving his handkerchief in farewell to him. Soon after that a heathen mob carried his headless body through the streets of a Chinese village. Pitkin's wife was in America at the time, and just on the night of his murder he sent his last message to his wife, saying, "When our little Horace is twenty-five years of age, it is his father's wish that he come back to China and take up the work which I am laying down."

Missions appeal to the heroic. Christ was the greatest hero of the ages. He presents to his church great

undertakings. His great commission, his worldwide purpose, the task of the world's evangelization, his announced purpose to put all enemies under him, appeal to our highest heroism. There must be heroic living, heroic giving, heroic suffering, and heroic service.

Doctor Zwemmer once held up before an audience a large black map of India, with its teeming millions without God and Christ. He turned his face, toward heaven, and said, "Thou, O Christ, art all I want!" Then he pointed his finger to that dark map and exclaimed, "Thou, O Christ, art all they want!" Such a dramatic scene as that is enough to melt the heart of any Christian, and stir all the heroic elements within him.

Doctor Pierson once said that the Christian must have four passions: A passion for the truth, a passion for Christ, a passion for the souls of men, and a passion for self-sacrificing. That is what Jesus meant when he said, "Ye shall have power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you"—the power of passion, the power of sacrifice, the power of heroic advance, the power of spiritual gianthood, the power of conquest—the power from on high.

Phillips, the brave sea captain, was a Christian of the finest type. He wrote in his hero Bible these words:

> "Put any burden on me, only sustain me.
> Send me anywhere, only go with me.
> Sever any tie but the tie that binds me
> to thy heart and thy service."

Let us not strike a minor note in our work. There are signs of a new day. It may be that the nations will soon see the hand of God on the wall and recognize him as the God of nations and the God of righteousness. God can cause the wrath of nations to praise him, and turn and overturn, until he, whose right it is, shall reign from the river to the ends of the earth. Who could utter a single

pessimistic note, in the face of the last command of Jesus, as he stood on resurrection ground!

But who can observe the extravagance, prodigality, expensive fashion, and excessive outlay for the pleasures of social life, and see what a pittance Christians spend for the church and how few give for the carrying of the gospel to that last man in the uttermost parts of the earth, and not conclude that the true solution of the problem of world evangelization is spiritual enduement and consecration? Then the money power of the world will be devoted to Christ, and missions in all lands will make a progress unknown in the past.

May God baptize the churches of America with a new missionary zeal for the lost man nearest home and the lost last man at the outer rim of humanity!

THE SIGNS OF HIS ROYAL PRESENCE.

The pre-existence and essential changelessness of Christ is the key to the significance of his advent. He belonged to the eternities. He antedated all time, space, and creation. His birth did not, therefore, break the continuity of his life.

In whatever form he appeared, he was the same in his essential personality and character. Despite all the changes in the evolution of redemption, Jesus Christ has been, and is, and ever will be the one abiding factor in the changing economy of human life.

His enfoldment in the Old Testament was followed by his unfolding in the New. The beginning of his earthly manifestation was at the point of his appearance in the flesh, which marked his wondrous birth.

From the prophetic description of the dignity of this coming One, the strange manner of his appearance seemed an incongruity. Even the humble shepherds evidently expected to see him come in greatness and majesty. Here we see the significance of the incarnation. It was a great surprise. But God must become flesh, in order to touch humanity and transform it. This is the deeper secret of the advent, so that, despite the seeming incongruity of his birth, the Son of God must come through the gate of infancy and poverty. This is the message of the incarnation.

"This shall be a sign unto you," the sign seen in strange paradoxes. His condescension is the sign of his divinity; his lowliness, the sign of his greatness; his helplessness, the sign of his power; his inconspicuousness, the sign of his glory. This is the mystery of mysteries. But while the incarnation is a supreme mystery, it is the most stupendous event in the life of God and the history of

mankind. And so it is worth our while to study the lessons of the incarnation.

The incarnation was a revelation. It was God's method of self-disclosure. The mighty truths of Christianity were revealed by incarnating them. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh. His earth life was the human life of God, expressed in terms of humanity. This is the divine method of communicating with man. Without the incarnation, Christianity would a be vague idealism, an intangible, inoperative thing. Revealed truth did not come in abstract statement. It was not painted in the skies or written in the language of angels, but revealed in the life and character of the divine man, Jesus Christ.

Christianity really means the perpetual incarnation of the life of God. Christianity is Christ. God put his truth in concrete form. Hence, he gave us a person, a life perfect in infancy, perfect in maturity, a life so filled with God that Jesus could truly say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Strangely God said through his messengers, "This shall be a sign unto you." The divine finds its best revelation in the human. Hence, we are to read in the face of the Child of Bethlehem the expression of the divine image, the lines of royal lineage, and the prophecy of hidden kingliness, capable of developing into final triumphal supremacy and victory. "Ye shall find the Babe." Strange evidence of the unique, peerless personality of Christ! What a stumbling block that was to the theologians! What a shock to human reason! What a challenge to simple faith! It was not an explanation of the miracle of the incarnation, but simply the revelation of a stupendous fact which has become the unimpeachable fact of history. It was the re-echo of prophecy. "Unto us a Child is born." And what a personage! All the extremes united in him;

creator and creature; babe and king; human and divine; God and man; riches and poverty; infinite lowliness and infinite dignity; the inhabitant of the eternities lying in a manger cradle.

Then, Jesus was not only wonderful in his unique personality, but he rose to *supreme leadership* from the most humble and inconspicuous earthly origin and surroundings. Earthly kings are born into positions of royalty and honor, but this Babe grew and rose above his environment and actually won his way to worldwide leadership and recognition.

There is a motto on a slab, placed by the students of Vanderbilt University in the Mammoth Cave, indicating the power of human possibilities. "From the lowest depths there is a path to the loftiest heights." The Lincoln Memorial, in Kentucky, suggests an illustration of how Abraham Lincoln rose from the obscurity of an humble log cabin to the highest position in this nation, and became the immortal emancipator of a race. Booker T. Washington ascended from the poverty of a slave to be the great educator and benefactor of his people. But their achievements are not comparable with the career of Jesus Christ. Think of the growing recognition of the Holy Child, as he marched through the centuries. He has won his way to supreme power. He is now the mightiest leader the world ever saw. He is the hero of the ages, behind all the aggressive movements of his kingdom, the genesis of all moral campaigns and the center of their embryonic life.

Men are acknowledging his lordship over life, time, and possessions, and are crowning him with loving loyalty. All that is true in science and rich in scholarship, all the poetry and song and literature and benefactions in his name, all the heroism and triumph and sweetness in Christian living and Christian service, unite to place the crown

upon the radiant brow of him, who was once the Child of Bethlehem, but who has long since become the inevitable one, and has won a supremacy and glory that defies oblivion.

The incarnation was also an invasion. Strangely and silently the God, incarnate, passed into the territory of earthly power. No sound of trumpet, or noise of artillery, or martial paraphernalia marked the event of his birth. The only sign was a mother, clasping in her arms a helpless infant in rude covering. Think of it! A helpless babe, lying on its mother's breast, was the sign of a coming conflict. What a contrast with the modern preparedness for war! The most inconspicuous person was to be the leader of the aggressive forces of God's kingdom. The issue gathered around the cradle of a babe. His very infancy was beset with bitter opposition, for his coming was the trumpet call against the powers of evil. Rulers became suspicious of the royal Babe. Emperors were afraid of their crowns. They met the Child with murderous plotting and pursued him to the end of his earthly ministry.

So his coming was really an invasion and a conflict. For he belonged to the royal line. He was a "born" King. He was invested with royal prerogatives, and hence his birth was far more to be dreaded than the rulers dreamed of, for this world belongs to God. These wicked rulers were usurpers of God's territory, and he has come to reclaim his own. The Child was destined to break the power of worldly supremacy and change the forces and currents of history into a Christian civilization.

We must read history in the light of the incarnation. Whatever may be the disturbing forces and revolutions of earth, Christ is the head of the church, and the church is under the law and reign of his kingdom. What a pity that all men should not have seen from the beginning

that it is in vain to fight against God. The divine Child has long since risen from his manger cradle and has ascended to his throne of power, where he now sits in growing supremacy and influence.

And blessed are they who have a vision of Christ in the sweep of his power and mission, and see clearly that all moral revolutions and campaigns for righteousness, in order to have permanent success, must co-operate with Christ and move under the law of his truth and love.

The incarnation meant such an entrance of the divine into humanity that *Christ might be enthroned in all the relations and realms of human life.*

Christ made all life sacred and precious by the touch of his presence. He came to purify, exalt, and ennoble it. The only thing that ever marred life was sin. Jesus, being sinless, touched life at every point, hallowed it, and made it the sweetest, richest, and most joyous treasure in the universe.

Jesus made it a glorious thing to live. His relation to all periods and stations, growing out of his incarnation, is most charming and inspiring. He became a babe, that he might hallow infancy. He was a child, that he might crown childhood. He was a young man, that he might honor youth and ennoble manhood. He toiled, that all labor might be honorable. He was a son, that he might crown womanhood and hallow motherhood. He dwelt in an humble home, that his presence might make its sacred precinct the sweetest place on earth, the very type of heaven. Home fellowships and associations reach their highest ideals in Christ. The deeper, indissoluble tie of love and sympathy is the cohesive power that keeps the home from shipwreck, and makes it the preserving unit of our nation and our civilization.

Christ is the bulwark of the home, which must be preserved with all its purity, beauty, simplicity, and divine

innocence. Charles Hanson Towne takes us "Back Home for Christmas," with a beautiful tribute to it as a place of retreat and content. He says:

"I went back home for Christmas,
And I was glad I went,
For in that little village
I found the old content.

"The wreaths within the windows,
The nods and smiles for me,
The unforgotten welcome,
The clear serenity.

"And ah! that wondrous moment
I clicked the little gate,
And trod the snow-bound pathway,
Joyful, swift, elate!

"The porch—and then the fire,
Within that ancient room!
Oh, in my heart a frgrance—
The holly's deep perfume!

"And then the old folks 'round me,
The servants in the hall,
A dozen hearty kisses,
A warm, 'God bless you all.'"

Then he repeats, with tender memory,

"I went back home for Christmas,
And I was glad I went,
For in that little village
I found the old content."

Home! Magic word! The child, the mother, love—these make the home. In it are the most precious memories of life. It is sweetened by the spirit of kindness

and fellowship. It is thrilled with the joys of childhood, and brightened with kind remembrances and gifts, binding hearts together in the tenderness of affection. Jesus can make home a foretaste of heaven!

The advent of Christ was the *inauguration of the era of true human brotherhood.*

Without discussing the issues of war, let it be said that if war is ever to be recognized at all, it is to be considered a necessary evil, an indispensable necessity in certain cases, a means of effecting reforms, securing justice and staying oppression, the last resort of patience in the right. The mildest thing to be said about war, is that, as a system, it is hideous in all its forms, and should speedily pass out of existence with advancing civilization.

We know that at the birth of Christ, society was rent and torn by strife and discord. Governments advanced their interest by the sword, and rulers violated with impunity the rights of the weaker. Coercion, by superior physical force, was the method of achieving success.

But Christ came as the Prince of Peace. Over his cradle the angels' song of good will was heard and its notes went out to all men. This is the genius of our religion. Brotherhood is the ground principle of our Christian civilization.

Every man is a brother to every other man. Christianity is the one great universal brotherhood, independent of class, or color, or nationality. The whole Christian system finds its expression in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of mankind. There is no place for hatred, war, and bloodshed in the Christian system. Divine love, which is the soul of our religion, ignores all lines of descent, overleaps all boundaries of nationality, and enables men to live together in mutual co-operation and helpfulness and love. This spirit is the genius of the democracy of our common Christianity.

The only weapon in the hands of the apostles was the "sword of the Spirit," the "helmet of salvation," and "shield of faith." Livingston, Paton, Hudson, Patterson, Judson, Penn, and others used the same weapons. They trusted in no power but the invisible power of Jehovah. That was the song of the first Christmastide, and it is the song of ours to-day. Peace is the glad promise and possession of Christianity. It is the sweet music that sweeps down from the skies to all homes and churches and peoples, and kindles hearts with the spirit of kindness, harmony, and good will. And at every Christmastide, in the exchange of gifts and the sweet expressions of parental and filial love, it is well to hear, above the wall of forts and ironclads, the noise of shot and shell, and the stealth of submarines, the angel's voice of peace, good will, and love, that shall change the night of heathenism and cruelty into the bright day of righteousness and a better Christian civilization, and bring this old world under the reign and dominance of the Spirit of Christ.

The Word of God is a *present voice and has a present tense.* "This shall be a sign unto you now." The world is looking for the signs of Christ's living presence. The insistence of the twentieth century is for present-day credentials of Christianity, rather than those of the first century. Where shall we see the Christ to-day? Not in the study of the miracle of the incarnation, but in the incarnation of the divine life in the human, as seen in the transformation of men and society.

Jesus resides in the hearts of men. He resides in human experience. The souls of men and women are the temples of his spiritual presence. Paul, in speaking of the indwelling Christ, says, "I live, and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Luther once quaintly remarked, "If any man knocks at the door of my breast, and asks who lives here, I will answer, 'Christ lives here—Martin Lu-

ther died years ago.'" This experience of the indwelling Christ makes heroes and spiritual giants. Whoever knew John B. Gough as a drunkard, in the wastes of his dissipation and bondage, and saw him changed and transformed into a colossal spiritual giant, did not fail to observe in his eloquent lectures and distinguished services the signs of the presence and power of Christ.

There are thousands of men and women everywhere who feel the thrill of a new life and the transforming power of a new vision. The real credentials of Christianity to-day are miracles of divine grace that change and transform and make the world better and happier. Christ is still being born in human hearts and incarnated in human life. He is now in our midst, casting out demons, helping to overcome passion and lust and greed, opening blind eyes, and building up out of the wrecks of moral catastrophe and ruin the noblest specimens of Christian manhood and womanhood, who are carrying the spirit of Christ and his gospel to the ends of the earth. These are the signs of his living presence. Dr. John Watson, in speaking of Christ in present-day life, has beautifully said, "If any person should ever have the audacity to deny that Jesus ever lived, he would the next moment touch the Master now in one of his disciples." So we may see evidences of Christ in all the ministries of life. In home and hospital, in palace and hovel, in high places and in low places, by the bedside of the suffering, needy, and dying may be seen his hand of blessing and benediction.

Wherever a wrong is to be righted, or a shackle to be broken, or a wound to be healed, or a burden to be lightened, or an aching heart to be solaced, Jesus Christ himself is there to help and bless. He is in perfect identification with his disciples in all their experiences. He is the most real person in all this world, and if men would but look for him, they would feel the magic touch of his

presence and see him shining in a multitude of beneficent and helpful ministries.

What a wonderful, present-day Christ! His magic touch burns our souls into enthusiasm and love. Let us enthrone him anew in all our hearts. Let us emblazon him on all our banners and humbly bow to him, who is filling the world with a new vision, a new spirit, a new love, and a new enthusiasm.

The incarnation of these elements is the sure sign of *his royal presence.*

DIVINE RETICENCE.

Human life never reaches its highest and best achievement without being under the power and inspiration of a positive, reverent faith in God. Any system of philosophy that shuts God out of the universe and denies his fatherhood is valueless.

What can atheism do to uplift and bless humanity? It stands for isolation, selfishness, and anarchy. It recognizes no authority above itself. It is faithless, hopeless, and purposeless.

Infidelity has no throne of power, no sun in the heavens, no star in the firmament. It recognizes no divine comradeship along life's journey and points to no home at the end of life's pilgrimage.

A reverent faith in the Fatherhood of God is absolutely essential in human affairs. The sense of human dependence is so keen and the pressure of human need so heavy, that the soul of man cries out for succor, and faith reaches up for divine help. Man's greatest hope and inspiration comes from a recognition of God as a personal, holy, gracious being. God sits on the throne of the universe, as a sovereign, and rules in infinite wisdom, love, and benevolence. Whether he speaks or not, delays or hastens, man's only hope and consolation is to take refuge in the character of God as a holy, loving Father. But, even then, in the pressure of the burdens and sorrows of daily experience, we cannot keep back or still the cry of the heart of our common humanity, perplexed over the reticence of God.

God is silent respecting his self-existence. The Bible does not attempt to prove or demonstrate the existence of a Supreme Being, as Creator. It challenges our faith by asking us to take that for granted, and simply makes an

announcement of that fundamental, eternal fact, in the expression, "In the beginning *God.*"

Man's faith must not rest on mere human reason or speculation. It must rest on the *ipse dixit* of God's Word, which is a revelation of his love to men. If we reject God's communication in the form in which it came to us, then we choose to remain in the darkness of uncertainty and doubt. We cast God's Word to our feet in disrespect and contempt. The author of Hebrews starts with the fundamental statement, "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him." While God does not speak directly concerning himself as the uncaused, self-existent Being of the universe, he has put in the human soul the cry for the infinite and eternal. This God-idea lies deep in human consciousness. It is the basis of all religious belief. No race or people has ever been without it.

This God-idea is based upon two fundamental facts. One is that *God is the only rational explanation of the universe.* God does not exist because Revelation declares it, but the Bible announces it because it is an eternal truth. Here science and revelation harmonizes in solving the problem of creation. Science goes back to origins, in search of God, but can go no farther than that. Professor Fischer observes that "nothing can be evolved that was not before involved." Says Jeremy Taylor, "What could be more foolish than to think that all this rare fabric of earth and heaven could come by chance, when all the will of art is not able to make an oyster." Kant, the great metaphysician, declares, "Give me matter and I can explain the formation of the world, but give me matter only and I cannot explain the formation of a caterpillar."

The Christian scientist, in his ultimate analysis, starts with what he sees and goes back of organized matter to

chaos, then to nebulae, and then back to what is called the "primordial germ," and after he has reached the last infinitesimal atom of matter, the problem of creation is still unsolved. And when the scientist reaches his journey's end, he drops his hand, and reverently asks revelation, "Who made matter—the first atom?" Then revelation answers, "In the beginning God."

God is the fundamental need of humanity. The human heart is restless without God, because he has put into it the idea of the infinite, the cry after God. Nothing can still this cry. Man is so constituted that he will have God, or create one. This is the philosophy of systems of idolatry. If man does not worship the true God, as he is revealed, he will worship a god of his own creation, which explains the various images used in many religions of the world. Pathetic it is to see the nations groping after the true God in ignorance and darkness. The human heart is a vacuum without the sense of God's presence, it feels the loneliness of its orphanage. The Psalmist utters the voice of the soul in its longing for God, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

The atheist flatly denies the existence of God, and the agnostic speaks of him as the "unknowable," because the Bible does not demonstrate and explain his uncaused self-existence. But what the restless, aching heart of humanity needs, is not the scientific explanation of God's existence, but the touch of his presence, and the manifestation of his love and power.

When the human soul has vainly sought every source of refuge in the storms and trials of life, it finally lays its tired, burdened heart upon the bosom of the Heavenly Father, and exclaims with triumphant satisfaction and joy, "Lord, thou hast been our homing place in all generations; before the mountains were brought forth or

thou hadst formed the earth and the heavens, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God."

Then, *God is silent respecting the evil devices of men.* In all ages, conspiracies have been formed against the people of God. Individuals have plotted against one another. The lust of conquest has arrayed nation against nation. Might has crushed right. Personal greed, social injustice, organized iniquities, and national oppression have marred the annals of human history with the darkest crimes of earth. Think of the awful cruelties of Russia, the ruthless butcheries of Turkey, the bloodthirsty spirit of Spain, South America, and Mexico. Behold the unbridled, conscienceless, murderous foes that attack the home, the community, and the state, and lay their poisonous hands upon all that is pure, noble, and beautiful. Why does a holy, just God withhold the manifestation of his displeasure and not speedily execute the law of retribution? Why does he not speak with the voice of omnipotence and give the maltreated and oppressed immediate help and deliverance?

From a human standpoint, one would think that divine patience and long-suffering would cease to be a virtue; that God would, with a whipcord, drive out of the sacred places the money-changers, cleanse the cities from crime and debauchery, put to shame and confusion the evil designs and machinations of men and women, and banish from the earth, everywhere, those who defy his authority and resist his will.

But men do not understand the mystery of God's love. God is the sovereign ruler of the universe. He sits on his throne in the heavens and laughs at his enemies. The law of Jehovah is unchangeable and eternal. He sees from the beginning to the end of all things. His wisdom is past finding out. His purposes are working out to finality. His honor will be vindicated. Evil-doers will

in the end, reap the awful harvest. Truth and righteousness are sure to prevail.

The history of God's dealings with the human race, so rebellious and disobedient, presents the striking picture of his amazing patience. And yet this does not satisfy the obedient child of God. The problem of human suffering and trial haunts him again and again. He is not smitten dumb in his sorrow. Blind resignation does not bring peace to his troubled soul. His soul cries out, "How long, O God?"

The Christian conception of God's fatherhood gives more concern than the Jewish conception of God's sovereignty. The Jews, with acquiescence, exclaim, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" But the Christian walking in the will of the Father, asks with anxious heart, "If God is just and loving, why does he permit the good to suffer, and how can he endure the hardships of his children?" If good men are perplexed over the problem of human experience, they are not to be too severely criticised or condemned. For, "delays that appear permanent disappointments, are the long, sad record. The expectation that is from God has often seemed to be least regarded, the most completely ignored. God's prophets have been left to perish, while iniquity has gone on its triumphant way. In the tumult of the ages, every voice has seemed to be audible but God's. In death, the hope of the righteous has appeared to meet with its final contradiction. It is manifest that God does not run this world according to our mind, but according to his own. It is clear that his thoughts are not our thoughts, nor our ways, his ways. But herein is the promise of a vaster hope than man can entertain, and a realization worthy of the perfector of that hope. History makes it clear that the contradiction of human expectation is for the sake of a sublimer realization, and that this contradiction comes,

because, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's thoughts higher than man's thoughts and his ways higher than man's ways."

God is also reticent respecting his providence. Human life is largely an enigma. It is a sealed book in many respects. It is encompassed with strange events and deep mysteries. Poverty, disease, and accident largely make up the burden of the world's suffering and sorrow. Flood, fire, storm, shipwreck, and war destroy lives, crowd hospitals with the maimed, and fill homes with desolation and sorrow. Men look on this painful side of life and often repine and lose heart. They swing from faith to doubt, and wonder why God does not explain his dealings and attitude toward them. In the bitterness of loss and suffering and misfortune, the heart has a hard struggle to hold on to the love of God and trust in his goodness. In a series of adverse providences, new sorrows come and pierce the old wounds, and the same old question haunts us, "Why does God permit these experiences, which make up the tragedy of life?" "Why does he remain in silence and withhold an explanation of his apparently indifferent attitude?" Men, under such a crucial test of faith, and in the agony of their soul, often refuse to be put off by being told that they must not doubt and repine in the absence of an audible voice or direct interposition. Why does God silently sit watching over us, in the crucible of our afflictions, and not speak to us, as we think and wish? This is the problem of human suffering.

There are reasons for this divine reticence. First of all, it *stimulates investigation.* God has graciously communicated his will to men. This method of communication was in concrete form, to adapt divine truth to the apprehension of the finite mind. Revealed divine truth is, therefore, hidden behind forms, visible and tangible. We get only glimpses of God's infinite thought, expressed

through external signs and types. It is hidden behind the material and external. It is left for man to discover this hidden truth. Earnest mental, prayerful research is necessary to the discovery, application, and appreciation of divine truth. Hence, in the very nature of things, human research becomes a blessing. Man must search deep into the mine of revealed truth, in order to properly interpret the mind of God. Knowledge of God and his will comes through careful and prayerful investigation and study. For, if God had flooded the human mind with the light of a full, unclouded revelation of himself, it would have defeated his gracious purpose in human salvation. It would have dazzled and blinded human vision instead of gradually revealing to man's dull mind the deeper truths of God.

By research the Christian student learns that this universe is constructed upon a plan too great for human comprehension. It transcends all finite thought and imagination. He learns that God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor our ways as his ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts higher than our thoughts.

We may thank God that he tempered the light of his revelation to our dim vision, encouraging us to search after him, in Christ, until we found him in all the beauty of his holiness, omnipotence, wisdom, and love, to the joy and satisfaction of our souls.

Then, study and research show that *God rules this world by certain unchangeable laws,* which are the expression of his will and love. The operation of these laws and the tendency of these forces are in the direction of progress and a final, blessed outcome. Investigation also reveals the inspiring truth of God's imminence. He is not far off, but present in the affairs of human life. This puts enthusiasm in life. "In him we live and move and

have our being." God is back of all things. The whole universe is the product of his infinite power and wisdom.

So that when the scientist speaks of "nature," "law," "force," he simply employs other words that represent God. What some men call "force" or "law," the Christian student calls God. Behind all the fabric of nature, is a personality, a Heavenly Father, who shelters in the heaviest storm, provides in the direst emergency, walks with his own in the darkest night, and silently pours upon them a floodtide of his infinite love. His reticence does not stay his hand of blessing, nor his long silence turn his smiling face from us. While his audible voice cannot be heard, we can feel his heart beats in a thousand ministries.

This *divine reticence exhibits God's wondrous love and mercy.* Man's creation displays divine love. God's paternal disposition desired some one to love, so he created man to be the object of his affection and care. But he intended that man should be an act worthy of that love. He clothed man with the power of volition, in order that he might reach the highest possibilities of his being. He can resist God and bring self-disaster, or obey God and receive his favor and blessing. God is not a God of vengeance, but of love and mercy. While he silently allows his children to endure wrongs, injustices, and persecution, and does not break his law to interpose and avert disaster, he does not visit destruction upon the wicked and erring. God's gracious purposes are clearly evident in this manifestation of his abounding mercy. In contemplation of this divine attitude, the Psalmist exclaimed, "Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever." So Paul's exhortation, "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

Let no one charge God with harshness in dealing with sinful men. He is the God of love and mercy and patience. His silence is like the silence of a father, grieved over the rebelliousness and waywardness of his children. No father or mother, ever so kind and loving, has a heart like that of our Heavenly Father, out of the infinite depths of which flow fathomless streams of forgiving love toward all who are sinful and erring.

Then, *this divine reticence tests and develops Christian faith.* Adversity may be a blessing. Opposition may bring strength. Suffering may enrich the soul. And if the soul, in the night of affliction and trial, holds fast its confidence in God, it will develop into giant strength. In the darkest hour, Job said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust him." In trial, his faith grew and shone in noonday splendor. In all the adverse experiences of David, his faith increased into triumphant joy over the providences of God. Paul's faith grew through his long, checkered career, until he reached the uplands of Christian experience. Then he shouted, "We glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope does not shame or disappoint." In the evening of his life, the faith of that battle-scarred, grand, old missionary hero mounted up to a vision of the outcome of sanctified trial, the compensation and fruit of suffering. "Our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Paul knew that his stormy life would pass into a glory indescribable and eternal, that his night of suffering would pass into brightness, and the bearing about in his

body the dying of Jesus would be rewarded with a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Paul reviewed his life of varied experience and declared that, in the providence of God, all things had worked for his ultimate good. Using the figure of a weaver beside his loom, he declares that some "things cannot be explained by themselves. At the weaver's hand are many shuttles, filled with differently-colored threads. He now thrusts in a white, a blue, a black thread. You cannot judge the purpose of the weaver by the thrust of one shuttle or the weave of one thread, white or black. You must wait until he has emptied all of his shuttles, until he has thrust in all the woof and knit up the warp together. Nor can we judge God or pass upon his ultimate purpose in our lives by any one event in our experience, or by any one day or year in our lives. We are yet on the loom; his shuttles are not all empty. Give God time to put this and that together, to complete the purpose of his providence. It is the end that crowns the work." That end is the edification of believers, the completion of the temple of character, the "perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ; till we all attain unto the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

How much is lost through lack of faith! Sorrow is a great educator. It develops character and enriches life. Discipline brings strength and beauty to personal character. Men reach great spiritual heights by way of Gethsemane. Self-conquest and moral triumph come by way of Calvary and the cross. Those who have shed tears, carried burdens, suffered losses, whose hearts have been pierced with grief, and who have risen out of the depths of sorrow, have become the world's greatest benefactors

and ministering messengers. Sanctified suffering puts pathos and sweet music into the soul, and gives a passion for others who are fighting the battle of life.

Let us remember that, notwithstanding our heart-questionings concerning his reticence, *God is speaking to us in many ways,* and communicating to us through many channels. Too often, through ignorance, doubt, sorrow, and secularity, our ears are too dull and heavy; we do not attend so as to catch the whisperings of his voice. If we would let the spirit touch our ears and make them sensitive, we would recognize God's voice of life in every blade of grass, his voice of love in every flower of the field, his voice of light in every star in the heavens, his voice of power in every storm, and his mute, inarticulate interest in every helpful ministry of life. Then, if our hearts catch the sweet notes of his love and care, we shall sing the song of restful trust.

"God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace,
Behind a frowning providence,
He hides a smiling face.

"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his works in vain.
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

If all tried ones would walk with God, as Enoch did, and trust him in the dark, as did Abraham, and as thousands are now doing, they would realize that God is in their lives, even with his chastening hand and refining fire, to cleanse away their baseness, change their selfishness into sacrifice, and transfigure their lives into the moral beauty of Christ-likeness. In the end they would sing the song of joyful trust in God.

"One thing we'll find on looking back
On God's o'ershadowing care,
And that is this: when we need help,
He helps us where we are.
"He does not take us from the hurt,
But makes the hurt his own,
And carries ours, and helps us bear
What we can't bear alone."

In silent communion with God, the voice of the Holy Spirit speaks to our inner being. Elijah, in distress, put his head between his knees, absorbed in prayer, to hear the voice of God. But God was not in the storm, or the earthquake, or the fire, but in the still, small voice that spoke to his anxious soul. Quiet communication with God is sufficient for Christian faith. Press into his presence. Tell him the questionings and misgivings of your heart. Unbosom to him your secrets. Then he will enter into the sanctuary of your being, walk in the garden of your soul, and whisper to your troubled spirit the secret of his love and purposes. In the bosom of the Father, away from the noises of the world, the strife of tongues, and the reasonings of man, there is abiding relief and quiet, as he whispers, "Be still, and know that I am God." In the storms and fluctuating experiences of life, faith in the holy character of God, and refuge in his infinite, loving heart, is the surest place for the child of God.

THE LAW OF ENVIRONMENT.

Man is a social being. He stands related to all other human beings by virtue of the elements of his complex personality. He has a twofold relation—Godward and manward. He dare not, with safety, ignore these two fundamental relations. They encompass his whole life and involve the most serious responsibilities and obligations. Human society is based upon this social principle that inheres in man's constitution. It is made up of related units, and is wholesome when men recognize and cultivate this relationship. Isolation means selfishness and death to all the higher, richer, and larger things connected with a solidarity of life.

The individual is an integral factor of society. Society is a factor of civilization. These two factors must not be dissociated nor set against each other. No one lives to himself alone. He is in a community of interrelations, which affect his weal or woe. Man has no choice in this fundamental relationship. He is born into it. By virtue of his very existence, he sustains a relationship to every other member of society and the race.

This is one of the most vital facts of life. Man is necessarily under the law of environment. He is influenced by his surroundings. Environment helps to mould personal character. Training, occupation, association, fellowship are powerful factors in determining the character and current of personal life. Paul, in his characteristic style of writing, broke into the midst of a great argument and threw in an exhortation and warning, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Vice and virtue are contagious. Bad associations tend to make bad men. Good company usually makes good men. Human life takes shape, color, and tone from

its surroundings. This is true in all relations in life, in the home, counting-room, college, and business life. The books we read, the companionships we choose, the social atmosphere we breathe, and the conversations we hear, exert a powerful influence upon us, either for good or evil.

Conceptions of life influence and control human conduct. Epicureanism takes no account of the future. It denies the fact of a future existence. It moves along the plain of self-gratification and sensuality: "Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." To that class of persons, life is an evanescent thing, a vapor that disappears into the air, a shadow that passes into darkness, a dream that is told. It led Xerxes to burst into tears at the sight of his army of three millions, as he thought of them soon coming to their graves in a pathetic ending. It led Voltaire to look upon life's closing as a tragedy and catastrophe. To him it was a "leap into the dark." Such a conception of life makes men careless of their associations and surroundings. They rush madly on in the path of self-gratification and sensuous pleasure.

But it is not all of life to live nor all of death to die. Life has continuity and destination. It is a part of an infinite whole. It is the vestibule to another world. It is the time-gate into eternity. It has eternal meaning. Under this law of environment, every one is compelled to fight a battle. He must fight for self-mastery. He confronts two opposing forces, the one, internal, and the other, external. Every good person is hampered with an inner tendency to evil. All human experience corroborates this germinal fact. Even with the Christian, there is a constant battle in the soul. Grace in the believer struggles daily against a persistent tendency towards evil. Then, besides this inner struggle, there are hostile external foes to contend with. He who reads a vile book,

or views an impure picture, or hears an obscene word, adds to the force of his own evil nature the influence of the author with whom he communes. These two evil forces combine to dethrone his better self and overthrow his manhood.

Whoever chooses ungodly associations and prefers to breathe the atmosphere of unsavory society, places himself in relations perilous to his morals. Deception is easily fallen into in these times, when the currents and counter-currents of evil flow with terrific force against the good character and habits of young life. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." In the erection of the superstructure of personal character, besides the inner elements of faith, love, courage, moral ambition, and high ethical ideals, respect must also be given to this law of environment. To ignore it is to invite peril and ruin. Lot invited peril when he remained in Sodom. Peter encouraged his downfall in keeping company with the maids about the fire in the courtyard.

We live in a world of evil as well as good. We cannot escape the trials and temptations of life. They try and test us at every turn in human affairs. But it is not wise to run into evil and cherish evil companionship. Rather adopt the present-day motto, "Safety First." Select friendships and fellowships that protect, elevate, and ennoble.

But man is lord of all the world. By nature, he is superior to his environment. He is a conqueror of the forces about him. He wears the crown of kingliness. He carries in himself the possibility of moral victory. But he has not completed his victory. He is still in the midst of a terriffic battle for conquest over human nature and human conditions. Human appetite, passion, impulses, lust, and diabolical inclinations, expressed in con-

crete form, present environments that chafe, devour, and degrade. These inveterate forces can be subdued and overcome and man can stand triumphant in the midst of his unfavorable surroundings. He need not be held in bondage to his present conditions, else improvement and progress would be impossible.

There is hope for men in Christ. In his scheme of redemption, moral triumph and spiritual reformation are attainable. Men have become masterful in their day and generation. They rose from the swamps to the heights of life. They were masters of their environment.

Joseph did not allow the Egyptian influences to turn him away from the true God. Elijah, Moses, Daniel, and John the Baptist rose above the plane of their times. Jesus rose above his own race, clime, and age. He was broader than the exclusiveness of Jewish thought, wiser than Grecian philosophy, and greater than Roman power, rising above and rebuking the social life and customs about him.

As the head and perfect representative of the race, Jesus showed the possibilities of human life in self-mastery and individual sovereignty. The philosophy of Christianity includes both self-mastery and moral conquest over environment.

Jesus came not to destroy, but to fulfill all type, prophecy, and law. He was the greatest of all prophets, and carried the fundamental doctrines of the old covenant over into the new covenant and gave them broader applications. His teaching harmonized with the Old Testament prophets, but was also a distinct advance. The prophets thought of the Jewish commonwealth and addressed it as such, while Jesus thought of the individual as a unit of the nation, and cared for the human soul as an integral part of the Jewish state.

Jesus was no less patriotic than Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel because he placed his estimate on the value of the individual soul. His heart burned with the fire of patriotism. He taught truths bearing upon social and national life. His plan of redemption includes Christian individualism as well as Christian socialism. It is a philosophy wherein the individual is not lost sight of in the masses, and where personal righteousness lies at the basis of human society and good government.

Christ said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The Christian is a freeman in Christ Jesus. He has power in Christ to overcome the bondage of sinful habits and turn his back upon the force of evil companionships, social customs, and prevailing sentiments.

This power liberated Luther from the bondage of the monastery; it emancipated Newton, Gough, Macauley, Hadley from the slavery of sin and helped them to erect the edifice of Christian character that endured the changes and tests of life. These men ended their careers with the knightly crown of moral conquest upon their brows.

Men may not be able to change the current of thought and conduct, but they can prevent themselves being changed by those influences. Man's greatest growth is not when he is swept along with the popular current of thought and general movements of reform, but when he stems the sinful currents that surround him and stands faithful to truth and right in the hour of wrongdoing.

It is a happy omen that both the Church and State are beginning more and more to regard this law of environment as a powerful influence upon individual character. The Church and State are so interrelated and interpenetrated that they touch each other at many points. Their interests are interlocked. The Church is in the

State, but not of the State. This relationship is intimate and mighty in all that pertains to their common welfare.

The Christian, therefore, assumes a high and responsible position in the State, because his influence interpenetrates society in the various relations, activities, and enterprises of public life. This responsibility is tremendous and should be discharged in the fear of God. Christianity has reached a crisis in its relation to the solution of the political, social, economic, and moral problems of our complex life. The forces that are working evil in the State can only be counteracted by Christian influence and sentiment. Ten righteous men could have saved Sodom, and ten million righteous men can save America.

Christianity is being put to a severe test as to whether her representatives, as personal units, shall stand for principles of righteousness, fairness, and equity in all individual, social, commercial, and governmental affairs. This is no time to bow at the shrine of greed, or wink at demagogism, or temporize in the presence of patriotic duty. The new day is upon us for higher and better things, both in Church and State.

The broader interpretation of the mission of the church is that it includes Christian citizenship as well as the worship of God. It furnishes a broad program, not only for temple worship, but also for social and civic service. It enforces the sanctification of the individual and the purification of social relations in the promotion of civic righteousness. The church should define the moral ends of society and expound the moral principles upon which human rights are based. It is under moral and patriotic obligations to make men and society better in the solidarity of life.

Doctor Batten, in "The Social Tasks of Christianity," well says: "In the United States there are thirty-four

million church members, over thirty-four per cent. of the population, all professing faith in Jesus Christ and praying for the coming of God's kingdom. Suppose these people were united in their efforts to abolish some of the great wrongs of the world, such as child labor, the liquor traffic, the red light district, city slums, the desecration of the rest day, municipal corruption, and corporate oppression; suppose they should join hands in their efforts to secure justice for all, to provide playgrounds for children, to save boys and girls from a life of vice, to widen the door of opportunity for all, to build more sanitary cities, to give every life a true inheritance in society, to create a better and more moral social atmosphere for all; how long would it be before the wrongs would be abolished?

"Suppose Christian men realized that their supreme business is to organize and create a just, fraternal, happy Christian state on earth, how long would it be before the streets of the new city would be laid, and the walls of the holy city would begin to appear?"

We are not an infidel nation. Our civilization is based upon the recognition of God, the authority of the Bible and Christianity. It is the duty of the Christian State to join hands with the Christian Church in emphasizing the value and importance of the religious education of the youth. All around the moral and religious training of our youth lie grave problems that touch every interest of the Church and the moral welfare of the nation.

Both the religious teacher and the Christian statesman must pay careful attention to the environments that affect the life of the Church and the nation. Why should not the State join with the Church in building up a good citizenship, so as to make it easier to do right and more difficult to do wrong?

Many changes have taken place in the Christian centuries respecting method, program, theory, and credal statement, but there has been no change in this law of environment, relating to the soul and its surroundings. The divine philosophy is to set up in the human heart the kingdom of heaven, and then let it work out through personality in an external manifestation that shall lead to a consistent correspondence between the internal and external.

The work of the religious teacher and the mission of the church is to save men and women from sin, and to surround them with wholesome environments that conduce to personal development, service, and happiness. The church's program for human betterment must be enlarged by taking in Christ's program for a larger life. Her wider task is to fulfill the purpose of Christ in transforming the social life of the world.

This task is to be accomplished through the process of construction as well as reconstruction. All men of good will must not only attack wrong, but enforce right. They must not only seek to abolish evil, but build up the good in its place. They must be set to great, inspiring objectives and high ideals, so as to develop and enrich their lives with the best that is within them. The positive must succeed the negative. Salvation from the evil implies salvation to the good, in order to make Christ's program constructive.

When such changes take place, then environments always change. The kingdom of heaven comes without observation. It seems to be a slow process, but it is coming as a leaven that is leavening the whole lump of humanity. All who love God and mankind should work steadily and patiently towards that end.

Christianity has to do with relationship, character, and destiny. It makes the trend of life upward, God-

ward, and optimistic. It provides for and works toward a glorious outcome. It means that our relationship to God and mankind shall be so holy that every gate of our spiritual being shall be open towards the infinite, and continue to be so until the dawning of that new day, of full redemption and perfection, when all of the environments of the redeemed soul shall be favorable, and every avenue of our being shall be flooded with divine light and peace. That will be heaven and home.

THE PLACE AND VALUE OF THE ALTAR.

Every life has a shrine. Man will worship something. God has put in the soul the instinct of worship, a quenchless need of God. The rationality of life takes God into account. We need God more than food or raiment. We cannot be happy without him.

The history of mankind reveals the need of the altar of worship. Man seeks communion with the Supreme Being in some form or other. If Christianity does not show him the true God, he will invent one for himself.

The altar reveals the deep antagonism between Christianity and modern skepticism. Skepticism does not believe in a personal, intelligent, sovereign Being who is above the material universe. Hence it baldly asserts the irrationality of prayer. To the atheist or skeptic, prayer is the folly of religious insanity. Of course, prayer without faith in God is a vain pretense.

The modern skeptic holds that this universe is run by mere blind force, under the iron rule of law, and that there is no personal being, we call God, back of all things. This is a dark view of the world. To be without God and without hope in the world is enough to send a thrill of horror into the soul of any rational being, and fill it with despair.

There is a form of modern skepticism that concedes the subjective value of prayer, but rules out the objective. The reflexive value of worship, where the soul has communion with God, is admitted. Out of the deep places of life's sorrows, burdens, and mysteries cries unto God for help and shelter do good in putting the one who prays in a better frame of mind.

There is a real subjective value in prayer. Jesus often took advantage of this phase of communion, when in the

fastness of the mountain he talked all night with the Father. To sit all alone in a park, or by the lake shore, or on the mountainside, or in the quiet dale in silent communion with God, and to think of his goodness, greatness, and love, results in the enlargement of the soul and sweetens the bitter things of life. Blessed privilege to come by faith into the bosom of the Father, and to lay the tired, weary, anxious soul there for quiet and rest!

But this subjective element is not sufficient for life's experiences. We cannot bear its burdens and fight its battles without the objective side of prayer. Things must be changed. Burdens must be borne. Enterprises must be re-enforced. There is always room for and need of the prayer of faith that lays hold of God and brings results outside of the petitioner. The needy, longing child of God looks for response and will not be disappointed. Otherwise prayer would be vain mockery.

My little niece once put up an imaginary telephone on the wall of her home and imagined she was talking to a friend far away and received responses. But only a child could be satisfied to talk to an imaginary person on the other end of the line.

But the prayer of faith talks to God and influences the one on the other end of the line so as to make changes. By way of the throne, we can reach our friends far away, and influence them. Answered prayer is a glorious fact. It is doing wonders in all the Christian lands of the earth. It is the most potent factor in the Christian enterprises. The rationality of prayer is evident. Our deep thoughts lead us to prayer. Our mysteries, misfortunes, problems, failures, and needs turn us to God. The storms of loss, perplexity, and bereavement drive the soul to God for shelter and refuge. The soul takes wings and flies to him for light, consolation, and strength.

Our tasks and burdens drive us to God. We have plans, organization, programs, methods of operation in our work, but with all these there is a deep, conscious sense of the need of divine guidance and help. Hence prayer becomes the supreme factor in all our enterprises. God himself is our greatest need, and prayer makes the connection between our weakness and his throne.

Prayer is the lever that moves the arm of God and brings the things we need. Prayer is practical. It does things. To retire from the crowd, to shut the door and be all alone with God, to linger with him until we know he hears us and we know we hear him; to tarry on the mountain top until our faces shine under the touch of his conscious presence, and come down into the valley with the assurance of our prayers answered, is wonderful.

Men assert that since the laws of the universe are inexorable, nothing can be changed by prayer. But God is both transcendent and imminent. He is above and in this world, energizing it by his will. It is therefore evident that as a personal, free being, God may operate in nature in modes altogether unknown to us. Hence the possibility of miracles that change things in response to the prayer of faith.

It is not accurate and scientific to speak of the forces and laws of nature as being synonymous. Law is only a term, expressing a rule of action. Therefore natural law has no existence in the sense of possessing energy or force. Law is simply the way in which force in nature operates. But the forces of nature, which derive their energy from God, are the operations of God through nature, producing certain effects. Nature is simply God's instrument, by which he expresses himself in terms of humanity. God is the great lawgiver back of law, and since he is transcendent, he has a higher law under which he may choose to operate.

It is patent that, since the universe is God's creation, it is unthinkable that he should stand powerless before his own creation. An infinite being, such as God, is surely not hampered by finite limitations.

Notwithstanding the assertions of skeptics, prayer is the supreme factor in life's activities and experiences. Spiritual victories come from supernatural forces. The home shrine of worship is glorious when God reveals himself in answer to prayer. Spiritual aggressiveness and conquests come when the church altar quivers with divine power. When the agonizing cry goes up from every family and church altar, then thousands will flock to our communion, as the doves fly to the windows.

Prayer does things. Daniel prayed to God and the windows of heaven opened. Nehemiah besought God in petition and the walls of Jerusalem rose up out of its ruins, for the people had a mind to work. Peter and Paul prayed to God in prison and the walls shook, the gates flung wide open, and the servants of God were miraculously set free.

We belong to the priesthood of God. By way of the throne we can reach men in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Africa, China, and other parts of the globe, and see changes that only can be wrought by supernatural power.

A religion must have the altar of sacrifice, service, and worship in order to be a religion of song and triumph. The life that has a shrine of worship is a life of reconciliation, peace, and power. The family that erects an altar to the living God and worships him in spirit and in truth is bound by the cords of love and is the very gate of heaven. The church whose altars are crowded with worshipers and whose devotees go forth into the sweet ministries of helpfulness to the needy and unsaved, will have a high tide of spiritual power and

fellowship, and be a radiating center which God delights to crown with increasing blessing.

The altar of worship, so much neglected in these days of pleasure and business, is greatly needed. It should be rebuilt and rekindled at the hearthstone of thousands of Christian homes. Petitioners, in united, importunate prayer, need to gather about the church altars until there is a spiritual atmosphere and winsomeness that makes it, like the home, the sweetest place this side of heaven.

Prayer is the inspiration of Christian enterprise and activity the world over. The revival now needed is the revival of the altar, and the supplying of the lamentable lack of believing prayer. Believing prayer will accomplish wonders. It will meet the crises. It will bring laborers into service. It will fill our treasuries with money. It will supply the needed sinews of spiritual warfare. It will bring a flame of fire upon the church leaders and anoint them with pentecostal power. Oh, for more altars of worship!

The church had its birth in prayer. Its progress is due largely to intercession. It makes its best and greatest advance on its knees. Dr. A. T. Pierson well observes: "A few souls that have close access to the mercy seat have kept up the apostolic succession of supplication; and because of this doors have been opened, workmen thrust forth, and money provided. But suppose the whole church would get down before God! What if, where one now prays a hundred were bowed on their faces like Elijah on Carmel! What if, in place of naturalism that is eating at the vitals of spiritual life, there might be a revival of faith in the supernatural, a new and universal awakening to the fact that God is a present, faithful, prayer-hearing God; that the closet is his anteroom, nay, his audience chamber, where, to the suppliant

soul, he extends his scepter and says, 'Ask what thou wilt in Jesus' name, and it shall be given unto thee.' "

Let us have the altar with the fire of God always burning on it. Let us ever emphasize Christian service and run on errands of mercy and helpfulness to humanity, but let us go by way of the temple of worship into the sweet and rich ministries of life.

Let us wait before God until we receive power from on high. Let us talk with Christ early in the morning watch, and let him make the hours of the day full of the sunshine of his presence. Let us tarry long enough to feel the magic touch of his presence.

Let the altar and service have their due proportion of emphasis, then Christian life will be blessed. It will shine with the glory of his presence, and overflow with the dynamics of his supernatural power.

DIVERSITY, UNITY, BEAUTY.

Paul was a master of the art of illustration. In presenting the great mountain truth of the resurrection, Paul not only showed the historical fact of Christ's resurrection, but also that it is the pledge of our resurrection. But the early Christians were perplexed over its great mystery. The apostle assumes the task of grappling with this mystery, presenting an array of facts, argument, logic, and figures. As he proceeds, his face shines with the light of heaven, his massive brain is touched with the fire of God, and his whole being pulsates with the conscious power of this colossal truth. Moving on the high elevation of thought and vision, he called to his aid a striking illustration to show the glory of the resurrection life. "For as one star differeth from another in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead."

This suggests three elements of vital connection:

Diversity. Diversity is a divine law. It obtains in all the realms of nature. It prevails in all kingdoms—mineral, vegetable, animal—and in regions terrestrial and celestial. This law of diversity is written upon every blade of grass, every leaf in the forest, every pebble on the seashore, and every human face. Even the light of the heavenly bodies differs, in luster, brilliancy, and orbit.

This same law is seen in the realm of humanity. Human society is made up of many different units. There are racial differences, in form, color, stature, and characteristics. Families and communities differ as certainly as individuals. This fundamental law is operative in the ecclesiastical world. May it not be that diversity, in the visible church, is a part of the divine plan. Since uniformity is not seen in other forms of life, might it not be destructive of life and growth in church life? Christ,

in his Sermon on the Mount, set forth two distinguishing features of the church, namely, flexibility of form and universality of aim. He did not indicate a detailed organization, as to creed, ritual, government, and administration. Christ simply set forth fundamentals, leaving the truth unbound and free, so as to meet the ever-growing needs of men and the ever-enlarging vision of the church. Paul intimates that under this law of diversity, the walls of Zion are to be built up and Christ's kingdom advanced. In the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians, the apostle shows that talents and gifts are so widely distributed among men that the aggregation of their diversified capabilities may more surely advance the kingdom of God on earth.

Paul also declares that this law of diversity extends into the celestial world; that differences exist between relationship and capacity there as well as in this life. The first relates to childship in union with the risen Christ. The second relates to mental and spiritual enlargement. Personal Christian character is essentially the same in both worlds, but it is the Christian's privilege to have such a full life, with an ever-increasing capacity, that he will enter the completed life with triumphant ovation, an abundant entrance. Heaven will be happiness and bliss to all who enter it, but it will be more to some than to others, through the soul's capacity to take in more of the things of God. A healthful religious life does not move on a dead level. It has expansion, ascent, widening vision, and enlarging capacity. The diversity lies not in happiness, but in capacity. God has made the soul of man capable of boundless development, why not make the most of our opportunities to improve it in this life?

Unity. Unity is a divine attribute. Since God is back of all things, the deeper element of unity underlies diversity. God is both the God of infinite unity as well as

infinite diversity. This deeper law of unity, underlying every variety of external form, runs through the entire universe.

A sharp distinction must be made between unity and uniformity. Uniformity brings everything to a dead level. It does not allow for personal convictions and individual peculiarities. It tends to crush personal liberty and volition.

Unity is independent of external form, and reveals itself in the midst of manifoldness and diversity. A great company, dressed in the same uniform, may or may not be in heart, motive, and purpose under the law of unity. So with real Christian unity. It is spiritual and internal. The great need of the church is the unity of the spirit, the unity of love, faith, fellowship, sympathy, co-operation, brotherhood—invisible cords that bind hearts and lives together in sacred bond. Love is the badge of true discipleship. "Ye are my disciples, if ye love one another."

Dr. Alexander Southerland, in speaking of oneness in Christ, says, "A deepening spiritual life, and that alone, will solve the problem of Christian unity. In proportion as the spiritual life is deepened we get nearer to God, and we cannot get nearer to God without getting nearer to one another. If this were kept steadily in mind it would save much random talk and wasted effort for the organic union of churches. The fact is the churches are kept apart, not so much by difference of opinion, as by lack of the mind that was in Christ. Christendom cannot be organically united unless it is first united in spirit, and it cannot be united in spirit unless there is great deepening of spiritual life. The remedy for existing divisions will not be found in argument or in compromises, but in that mighty working of the Holy Spirit whereby a creed is changed into an experience, and a profession is trans-

formed into a life. This is the true bond of union, and without it an external unity would be a rope of sand."

This deeper essential unity is the supreme need of the times. It is the only force that is abiding. It outlasts all chance and change. No power can quench it or destroy it. Not even the River of Death can intercept its flow.

"There is a spot where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend.
Though sundered far, by faith they meet,
Around one common mercy seat."

We are united with our departed friends in the love of the spirit. They are as really ours as ever, in the deeper, essential, spiritual oneness of God's people. We are a part of an infinite whole. We are the property of the ages and belong to the hosts immortal. "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Christ prayed for the essential oneness of God's people, that they might be one, even as he and the Father are one. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one church, one Spirit, one mission, one aim, and one goal towards which the church of God is moving. The time of unity seems far away, but the divine forces are working slowly and surely towards that blessed new day.

Beauty. God has so arranged that in the combination of the two elements of diversity and unity there shall be beauty. God seems to delight in variety and manifoldness in form, color, and design. The gorgeous rainbow, the golden sunset, the starlit sky, the verdant field, the variegated flowers, the enchanting landscapes are all the handiwork of God, set in pictures of exquisite beauty. With this manifoldness, there is the element of harmony which

is the charm of unity. Discord, opposition, friction, lack of harmony mar every picture of life and disturb every relation of life. The solar universe is made up of planets, satellites, stars, and systems, each pursuing its own path, all revolving around a central sun, without a single collision. This is the law of the universe, underlying all realms and kingdoms. The result of obedience to this law is diversity, unity, symmetry, design, harmony, beauty.

Paul maintains this fundamental conception in all his writings. "All things work together for good to them that love God." All of God's forces co-operate, run parallel, in the loom of creation and of providence. It is an inspiration to know that this immense universe, with all its forces and laws, its wonderful design, is the product of God's infinite wisdom, power, and love.

God sits at the loom, superintending the varied forces that are working out the final design of perfection and harmonious adjustment, and when the final consummation of all things comes, and his beneficent purpose is fulfilled, there will remain these essential, fundamental elements—diversity, unity, beauty; unity in diversity, and the beauty of perfect obedience to the divine will. Harmony is the music of the spheres, and will be the chief note in the anthem that will be chanted forever around the throne of God.

PLACING THE EMPHASIS RIGHT.

The key-word for the times is adjustment. The world is constantly changing. Life is ever progressive, expressing itself in new forms. If we would avoid getting out of joint with the changing times, and not becoming disheartened and disgruntled, we must learn the lesson of adjustment and adaptation. Whether things go our way or not, or whether the world progresses along the line of our preconceived notions or not, it is wise to be hopeful ever and optimistic.

Our greatest care should be to know where to place the emphasis. Every age has its peculiar needs and problems. As the world changes and new conditions arise, new problems confront the church. This will ever be true, so long as man is sinful, society is imperfect, and humanity is struggling toward the divine ideal. The history of the Christian church through the centuries is splendid and inspiring. She has successfully grappled with many of the peculiar problems of each age, and has become the inspiration of countless forms of service. But with all her splendid history, new tasks face her; she has not yet fully solved the problems of our modern life. It is clear that these modern-day needs and problems are multiplying in number and increasing in intensity and gravity. Evidently the Christian church is now confronting a tremendous crisis. She is facing her unfinished task in the redemption of the world, and it seems to the student of the times that this task is growing more and more gigantic and challenging. The accomplishment of this unfinished task is sufficient to try the faith of every Christian and test the power of the old gospel.

It is fair to assert that the prominent characteristic of this age is action—life expressing itself in organization,

program, method, attack, aggressiveness, specialization, and service.

This characteristic of action is wholesome and commendable. In taking a fresh survey of the world and its needs, and of the tasks before the church, the real question is, whether Christianity is adequate to meet the tasks of this modern world and to solve the problems of modern-day life; or, putting it in another form, whether the church is putting the emphasis in the right place, thus demonstrating the spiritual dynamics which she really possesses.

Is the church not in peril of distributing her thought and energy too generally to the countless details and ministries of her complex organization? Is she not doing this to the neglect of vital, underlying elements of power and success? With all of her commendable activities, is there not danger of misplaced emphasis? Or rather, of making subordinate matters supreme and putting secondary things first? Is it not wiser to lay the stress upon fundamentals? For surely there are some things deeper than program and more vital than method to insure certain success and permanent advance.

A careful study of these elements will help us to lay the stress where it will yield the largest and best results.

First of all, there is the element of *leadership*. The call of the hour is for adequate leadership. Never, in the history of the church has there been such an insistent demand for key-workers in all the departments and enterprises of Christian activity. The call is for trained men and women, who have mental and moral equipment, as leaders of the hosts of God.

The first problem of every church is the man problem. The call is for men of moral leadership, who have vision before action, and who have ability to actualize their vision in successful action; men of commandership, who

have the power of initiative, and can champion church enterprises and guide the forward movements of the kingdom into channels of power and blessing. There never was a greater demand and opportunity than now for efficient ministerial equipment and leadership. The way is open for the Christian pulpit to exert a tremendous influence in determining what shall be the prevailing characteristics of our present civilization in respect to moral ideals and religious standards of conduct.

The great spiritual builders of church history were such leaders of thought and action as Luther, Knox, Whitefield, Wesley, Otterbein, Finney, Chalmers, Beecher, Spurgeon, and others. Such leaders as Paul and John "changed the character of the Christian centuries." Great commanding leaders also guided the Reformation to the best results. The lesson of all history reveals the value of adequate leadership. This demand for leadership is no longer confined to any particular position or locality. The insistence is universal. The small country charge and the large, influential city pastorate alike call for such leadership as is now described.

The first element of success, anywhere, is an *equipment that gives self-poise and conscious power to the chosen leader.* This always commands confidence and co-operation in any enterprise. Whether a man is a graduate of a college or seminary, or not, whether he has had the advantages of academic and seminary training or not, if he is constructive, resourceful, and masterful in his administration, he will never fail to have followers that will help him to success.

Let nothing said here discourage any one who is conscious of being below the ideal. For probably no one ever reaches the ideal of perfect leadership. Indeed, a humble consciousness of being imperfect is the surest sign of growth and increasing efficiency. The growing

leader, whose spiritual and mental capital increases from year to year, is the main thing. His increasing productiveness is the measure of his power and efficiency.

The problem of *preaching* is also vitally related to good leadership. No preacher can reach the heights of strong, permanent leadership, unless he makes his sermons pre-eminently biblical. Expository preaching, in the main, is the surest road to permanent success in the pulpit. The preacher who undergirds and rivets his statements with divine authority, a "Thus saith the Lord," increases his hold on his audience, and multiplies his power. Here is where much sensational preaching is defective, if not positively injurious. It is a ministerial blunder to prepare a sermon for the public press, rather than for the hearers. It does not pay in any sense. As a rule, people do not go to church to listen to the discussion of sensational topics. Usually the people want spiritual help and not mere secularism. They crave something that rests their tired spirit, and gives them inspiration and strength for the oncoming struggles and battles of life. Governor Hanly once said, "When I go to church, I don't want to hear the rehash of worn-out weekly topics, but I want to hear the pure gospel, that will make me a better man and a better governor."

Then, the leadership of the preacher is strengthened if he is a *leader in Bible study*. A church cannot grow spiritually strong if Bible study is neglected. The pastor must provide for Bible study in his membership, if he would help them to the best in Christian life and service. The lack of systematic, careful, prayerful study of God's Word explains the apathy in many congregations, their indifference to missions, and their misconceptions of Christian stewardship. The trusteeship of life and property will be recognized and exemplified in proportion to the knowledge of Bible teaching. That preacher may not

be considered the best leader who depends upon his two Sabbath sermons alone to feed the flock and to lead them into green pastures of spiritual knowledge and delight. His sermons on Sunday must be supplemented by earnest, organized Bible study during the week.

Then, leadership is intimately connected with a *strong personality.* Bishop Brent, in his excellent lectures on leadership, emphasizes the power of personality. Nothing can withstand the force of a strong personality behind the message. A great personality on fire in the pulpit, delivering his message as if it were his last opportunity on earth to preach the gospel to dying men, is sure to impress his audience and move them toward God and righteousness.

A distinguished actor once said to an equally distinguished preacher, that the preacher fails because he delivers his message as if fact were fiction, while the actor succeeds because he delivers fiction as if it were fact.

The earnestness of Paul's personality is worthy of study. The privilege of preaching the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ filled Paul's soul with the music of heaven. It was sweeter to him than the droppings of the honeycomb. It put him into a new world. It gripped him with a love that could not be broken. It held him fast to his life work, and set his soul on fire with a mighty impulsion and propulsion to do the will of God. It filled him with the deep sense of ambassadorial responsibility. It overwhelmed him with a master-passion for humanity, and bore him to great heights of enthusiasm and sacrifice.

He who moves upon the high plain of a blameless life, and watches over his personality to keep it in the current of God's will and in tune with the harmonies of heaven, will always count mightily as a leader of the hosts of God.

We have also reached a period in the work of the church when special emphasis should be placed upon the

necessity and value of *lay leadership*. In the development and expansion of the church life and activities, the pastor must be a general, who lays hold of the capable and qualified laymen of his society to carry out the plans for the larger things of the kingdom. Every lay member, ideally speaking, should have some element of leadership along some line of influence and service. The laymen of the church should be enlisted and organized for definite work, in order to meet the demands of these strenuous times and challenging opportunities. The men should give a fair portion of their time, talents, and experience to the spiritual work of the kingdom. The necessity of organization goes without saying. Religious life must have form, boundary, and direction in order to have effectiveness; otherwise there will be dissipation, fanaticism, and waste of energy. The talent for organization is essential to effective leadership.

But organization has its sane limitation. The peril is that every fad that comes along is organized, until over-organization becomes a weight and a burden. The weakness of the visible church of Christ is its excessive organizations; its hope is efficiency.

What is now needed is not the multiplication of new societies, but the development of the church as a vigorous unit. This is the present task and opportunity, for there is a vast amount of hidden talent and latent energy undeveloped and unused. The discovery, development, and direction of such energy are the important problems of the religious leader.

The church should be a real *training educational agency*. Why not furnish information of various kinds that is helpful to the members? The church to-day must not only have an educated ministry, but also an educated laity. Young men and women must be cultured in order to be effective leaders. Literary circles, circulating li-

braries, lectures, are all important to develop the intellectual life of the church.

Then, the *missionary life* of the church should be perennial and kept at high tide. Surely an anti-mission church is an anti-Christian church. A church baptized with, and moving in the current of divine love will always desire that all others should share the blessings of the gospel. A church is mighty as a great missionary agency. The tidal waves of its life and power will find expression outside of itself. The present world situation challenges every energy of the church and calls for the highest consecration and most intense, aggressive, heroic effort upon the part of all Christians to meet the tasks before us.

Then, special attention should be given to the problem of the *social life of the church,* for it is a problem. God has given us a social nature, which should be recognized and cultivated. The church, normally, should be the social center for all its members and their friends. The special problem now is to give this social life proper expression and wholesome direction. The tendency is to let the world, the flesh, and the devil control all social functions. Too often church members attend these functions, and by their presence and participation give sanction and respectability to many things that the best-thinking people know are questionable, if not positively devitalizing and degrading. There is no doubt that much of the social life of to-day is dissipating and destructive of the spirituality of the churches, and church leaders dare not stand aloof and permit the social spirit of the church to run away with itself into channels that lower and obscure the witnessing power of Christ's church.

Religious leaders find this problem standing in the way of all their efforts to build up a symmetrical, religious church life, so as to make it an edifying and evangelistic power in the community. Mark it, local churches

that recognize and emphasize the importance of cultivating the social fellowship of their membership will be bound into closer and more cordial brotherhood and will fill their pews with sympathetic, interested hearers. Why not have frequent rallies, purely for social acquaintanceship and fellowship, even to the visiting of the homes of the aged, decrepit, and lonely, thus filling their lives with the warmth and cheer of Christian fellowship. This is pure and undefiled religion.

Unusual interest also should be taken in respect to the *care and training of the young*. Much emphasis is now being placed upon the Sunday school and the Young People's Society of the church. Every local church should lay itself out to increase the Sunday-school attendance. The surest way to expand and maintain a church is to adopt a plan to gather into the Sunday school the hundreds that never enter the church doors. Every Sunday school should have a wideawake lookout committee working all the year around. And every Sunday-school class should be an evangelistic force to constantly gather in recruits. The superintendent should be the most active, faithful, and enthusiastic factor in this outside work. He should put his best thought and energy into the campaign of expansion. Special days of rally are all important in working the expansion plan to its best success. It is clear, especially in our cities, that the home and street influences are so distracting and antagonistic to the religous life, that the churches do not have a strong hold on men of social and commercial life. It is difficult to reach and interest them in Christian service. Many men care little or nothing for church relation and church services. This indifference of men to spiritual realities and values is alarming and depressing.

The future hope of the church, therefore, lies in the children and youth who may be gathered in their early

childhood and teens, and be made, through religious education and training, good workers in the church. While great interest is shown for the children of this generation, yet there are thousands of children outside who never darken the church door or hear the name of Jesus. The voice of Jesus is still insistent, "Go out into hedges and highways and compel them to come in."

Teacher training in the Sunday school should receive tremendous emphasis, even beyond the stress that is now placed upon it. It is a heresy to hold that any religious person, without special qualification, can teach a Sunday-school class.

A re-emphasis of evangelism is greatly needed. For whatever may be the church's numerical strength, power of organization, social standing, and material resources, without the spirit of evangelism and a passion for souls, it is far from reaching the maximum of efficiency. The main business of the church is to save souls. It is, normally, the center of spiritual dynamics. Fundamental to all surface effort and machinery, is the inner, undergirding life of God in the heart of the church. This divine life, incarnated in each individual member, is the ideal of a church that actually represents the mission and spirit of Jesus Christ to a lost world. Every local church should become a center of evangelistic fervor and power, carrying the gospel to every portion of the community and to the uttermost parts of the earth. It ought to be so well organized that the current of evangelistic passion and life may, from time to time, be turned into a current of intensity, so as to warm, quicken, and enlist every member in the work of soul-saving.

A rich, divine life in men, consciously experienced and expressed, is the secret of loyalty and generosity. The consecration of personality and property accompanies the inflowing of a high tide of divine life and love in the

souls of believers. A personal persuasive evangelism is essential to gather recruits from the outside world.

It is evident that special emphasis should be given to the *social mission of the church.* The New Testament conception of the mission of the church is much broader than it used to be interpreted. While fundamentally the mission of the church is the saving of individuals, yet, broadly speaking, the church must also seek the saving of society. Modern-day problems can no longer be ignored or neglected by church leaders. The problems that effect life, such as wealth, poverty, human suffering, want, crime, prison reform, labor, charity, temperance, and social evils, must seriously engage the attention of the church leaders. A live church, adapted to present-day needs, will relate itself, not only to all that effects the welfare of man, but will show practical interest in every human need and every human good.

The salvation of society is important, as well as soul-saving; for society is simply an aggregation of individuals. We must never lose sight of the fact that besides individual vices and sins, there are special institutions, customs, and organizations which need to be grappled with by the Christian forces of the church. Christ should find a place in all the avenues of modern life—the office, the factory, the store, in commercial dealing, and even in governmental service. The law of Christ is plain. Every relation, duty, and service is equally sacred in his sight. The better recognition of this law will revolutionize human society and business life.

As the church more fully applies Christian principles to the needs and problems of modern life, and more conspicuously recognizes and illustrates this obligation in its leadership and fellowship, men and women will turn to the sanctuary, worship at its altars, and be constrained to show it proper respect and devotion. The work of the

church is to plant in the world the spirit of Christ, so as to make all forms and activities of life pre-eminently Christian.

Then, the social touch of the church must show its value in practical benevolence and helpfulness. The church must practice what it preaches. It must not only worship, but serve; not only preach about caring for the poor, but actually give them shelter, food, and clothing. It must do its share in providing for widows, orphans, the decrepit, and the unfortunate, and not be a whit behind other institutions in caring for its own distress.

Says Doctor Plantz about this social mission aspect of the church: "If Christ were on earth, he would walk the streets of the tenement district and enter the wretched homes to heal the sick, feed the hungry, and afford them help and blessing. He has commissioned the church to do this work, and when it does it in earnest, when its members go forth from the temples to make some heart strong, to feed the hungry and cheer the disconsolate, the breach between the masses and the church will be healed."

We are under the divine law of love, and this cohesive power binds all Christians into a real brotherhood that gives wonderful charm and attractiveness to the church of Jesus Christ.

The importance of giving special emphasis to the work of *unification and co-operation* in the upbuilding of God's kingdom is patent. In Christ's conception of the church there are no real divisions in Christian enterprises and activities. We are all of one family in the sonship of God. We are bound together by a common faith, a common aim, and a common fellowship in Jesus Christ. And this cohesive power makes us one in Christian activity, be it in education, evangelism, missionary enterprise, philanthropy, or department of publication and literature.

We all have common needs and common claims, one upon the other. The success of one is the success of all; the failure of one is the failure of all; the triumph of one is the triumph of all; the joy of one is the joy of all; the burdens of one are the burdens of all. In this continuity of relation lies the basis for unification and co-operation, so essential to impressiveness and power. Hence, there is no room for isolated and unrelated units. A selfish leader cannot succeed; he ought not succeed. He is doomed to final disappointment. He will lie broken somewhere along the pathway of life.

Then these are times when tremendous emphasis should be placed upon the element of *sacrifice, as the dominant element in all effective Christian service.* The cross is fundamental in the thought and plan of God for the redemption of the world. There is no hope for this lost world aside from the cross, and it is the pre-eminent business of the church to announce Christ crucified as the atoning sacrifice for the race sin, and the only sure basis for hope of personal salvation. The peril of to-day is the temptation to present a soft, bloodless, sociological gospel, the gospel of an ethical, manly, heroic Christ, as an easy way to get rid of sin and to get right with God. This may be popular, but is entirely too easy to rescue a wicked world and restore it to God. The Word of God puts tremendous emphasis upon this principle of salvation through the blood of Christ. It is the scarlet thread that runs through the whole Bible. The cross is the focal event of all prophecy, symbol, and history. It is the dynamics of Christianity, the crucial test of every gospel ministry, the key to the world's evangelization. It is the resolvent of all the problems of modern life. Sacrifice is the divine law, sublimely illustrated on Calvary. It is the law of our Christian civilization. It is the price of all progress. It was the talisman in the hands of Knox,

Luther, Edwards, Wesley, Otterbein, Spurgeon, Moody, and other divines who have turned the world upside down, and produced miraculous effects on individuals and communities. There is no hope for the salvation of America with all the evils of her complex life, aside from the gospel of Christ. The heathen world will forever lie in darkness without the light of the gospel. The evils of to-day cannot be removed simply by lecturing on the dignity of human nature, and the beauty and influence of ethical culture. Salvation comes through sacrifice. Redemption comes by blood. This principle is the eternal forethought of God, expressed in time on Calvary. "Jesus Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

The wicked world is not ready for the cross. Men must be impressed and won by its message. Salvation is the work of loving conquest. The church is a militant organization, and that means conflict, attack, aggressiveness, opposition to evil, rebuke of sin, and defense of righteousness. The Christ-life in us is the cross-spirit, and that is costly. We must pay the price of achievement. "The servant is not greater than his Lord."

Gypsy Smith tells the story of an artist who painted a picture of Jesus on the cross and then called in a friend to give her estimate of it. She said, with deep emotion, "You must love him to paint him like that." And the artist stood with tears flowing down his cheeks, and humbly replied, "I hope so, but as I love him more, I shall paint him better."

So, as we know and love Christ better, we shall be able to paint him better, as the inevitable, invincible, all-conquering One, whose transcendent influence shall finally transform the earth and abide forever. The cross is the greatest weapon that God has put in our hands. Let us wield it faithfully for God and humanity.

ESSENTIALS IN CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

In searching for the beginning of the Apostolic church, our eyes first rest upon that little group of one hundred and twenty at Jerusalem who made up the Pentecostal church. Those one hundred and twenty believers were Jewish Christians. They held to the single dogma, "Jesus is the Messiah." They were scrupulously religious. They took part in the worship of the temple and the synagogue; they prayed at the customary hours; they observed the fasts and were bound by special vows, like all pious Jews. Their preaching of the gospel followed the lines of Messianic tradition.

But these aspects of their religious life were external. They needed the miracle of the Pentecost to implant within them a divine life and to give them a deep, rich internal experience. Hence, the day of Pentecost was the birthday of the church, because the Christian principle, which hitherto had existed only externally and objectively, in the person of Jesus, passed from that moment into the hearts of his disciples.

Like the two parables of the mustard seed and of the leaven, the church was to possess the two aspects of Christian truth—external growth and internal development. Under the symbol of the tree, it was to grow into a great outward society, and under the figure of the leaven, it was to make a new humanity out of the mass of the old.

The history of Christianity has been the carrying out of these two distinct and yet two related sides of Christian truth.

The effect of the preaching of the first sermon was the conversion of three thousand souls, as described in chapter two of the Acts of the Apostles. Chapter three

gives an account of the miraculous healing of the cripple and the second discourse by Peter, which resulted in the winning of five thousand more converts. Chapter four describes the opposition which this success provoked among the people and their leaders. But these persecuted Christians prayed to God, and the Holy Spirit came upon them and filled them so that they spoke the words of God with boldness. Great unity and fellowship existed in the church and all were of "one heart and one soul"; "neither said any of them ought of the things which he possessed was his own"; "neither was there any among them that lacked." All gave of their possessions and laid them down at the apostles' feet, and "distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

That was the beginning of the recognition of the principle of *Christian stewardship and charity* in this new Christian community.

The fifth chapter of Acts begins with an example of church discipline. It seems severe and yet the sin was grievous and shocking. If overlooked, it would have brought the infant church into great disrepute and led to its downfall and ruin. The deception and falsehood of Annanias and Sapphira were met with summary retribution in their sudden destruction.

Thus the disciples, amid perplexities within and opposition from without, went forward teaching and preaching Jesus Christ and his resurrection. Multitudes believed and were added to the church. Their outward persecutions resulted in still greater progress, and their internal troubles led them to a more complete organization and closer fellowship.

Chapter six describes the first disagreement in the church. It grew out of the imperfect distribution of alms to the needy Hellenists. Is it not remarkable that both the hypocrisy of Annanias and this dispute between

the Jewish and Gentile Christians were connected with one of the noblest charities in church history? But the leaders were wise enough to correct it at once, and this correction formed an epoch in the church's history. Those very complaints of imperfect administration led the church to take its first step in the organization of a system of division of labor. It was the first step towards the creation of an organized ministry.

It was also the first step toward the emancipation of the church from racial intolerance and class prejudice. It marked the establishment of the new order called "deacons," that is, servants of the church. It also furnished an example of the flexibility of the Christian church, and its right to appoint men to serve it, by an orderly method, for any emergency that might arise in its mission and administration. It threw the responsibility of administration and discipline upon the church membership.

This new organization of the church for the better accomplishing of its work in a wide division of labor is worthy of study. As far as possible the business of the church should be removed from the ministry. The apostles were right when they said, "It is not fit that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables." The apostles were ambassadors of Christ and as such should concentrate all their energies in the work of prayer and the preaching of the Word. God uses the ministry of the Word to save and sanctify. The Bible clearly teaches that. It is peculiarly the calling of the preacher to minister in spiritual things, but he is often compelled to be engrossed in the material affairs of the church. It ought not so to be. The laymen, whom the church selects to administer its business affairs, are vested with a certain degree of authority and their office carries with it influence, dignity, and responsibility. The plan was to put

definite responsibility upon men of conscience and eminent godliness for this special work.

The manner of choosing these deacons, or stewards, is shown (Acts 6:3). The people nominated them, and the apostles endorsed their nomination. They possessed three qualifications: they were of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit, and possessed wisdom, or prudence. This new division of labor met with universal favor, and all were delighted with a plan that increased the efficiency of the church in its administration and unfettered the ministry in preaching Word of God, resulting in the spiritual edification of the new converts (Acts 6:5).

There were other great events in the gradual development of the young church that marked epochs in its history, such as the conversion of Saul and the sending of him, as Paul, to the Gentiles. Also the establishment of headquarters at Antioch for missionary operations in Asia Minor and Europe, and the work of collecting from those churches for the support of the needy in Jerusalem. The tardiness and delinquency of the church of Corinth in this respect, furnished the occasion for Paul's second letter to the Corinthians concerning Christian giving.

In the eighth and ninth chapters of Second Corinthians, Paul lays down for the church fundamental laws of Christian liberality. He saw that the church needed to adopt these principles.

Now, from this brief history of the church, we learn the essentials in church organization suited to the times in which we live.

The *spirit of Christian brotherhood* must pervade the church society. Church organization is powerless without vitality. This vitality is the divine energy, operating in the lives of Christians through the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit. This divine life is the life of love. Divine love is the soul of Christianity and the passion of

the church. The divine idea of the church is that of a Christian brotherhood, but this brotherhood has many sides. There are mutual affection, mutual devotedness, mutual self-denial in the support of the purpose and mission of the church.

Personality is indispensable to effective organization. A church is more than a creed or system of doctrine. It is more than a constitution setting forth laws and regulations on paper. It is more than a temple or synagogue or church edifice. The church is a society of persons who breathe, think, will, plan, and execute. The most perfect organization in the world is of small value without personality back of it. However beautiful a plan or system may be, it is not self-executing. The legislative and judicial branches of our Government are weak and inoperative without the executive department to carry the laws into effect. So the church must have the services of ministers, deacons, and other officers to carry forward its work in efficient administration.

Paul emphasizes the importance of personality when speaking of the church of Corinth. "They first gave themselves unto the Lord," he says. "I seek not yours but you," body, soul, estate. Paul here struck at the root of the matter. Too many are willing to give everything else but themselves. Self-dedication precedes service and beneficence.

Then, *system* in administration is essential. Personality is most effective in service when it works according to some system. No doubt the apostles were careless in the distribution of charity. At least their time and energies were too much taken in the planting of the gospel to permit them to do the other work with satisfaction. System was needed in the division of labor. The seven deacons must have order in their ministration. System

is necessary for efficiency and success; the want of it leads to failure and dissatisfaction.

Then, the *grace of liberality* must be cultivated in the membership. It is agreed that the church finances are difficult to manage. It was so in the early church, and yet there must have been considerable liberality to demand the services of seven deacons. The failure to manage the finances of a church successfully has always been injurious to that church. When a few persons carry the burden they grow weary of it; when scores of church members pay nothing it is disastrous and demoralizing. All kinds of schemes have been devised to overcome this difficulty.

The question of church finances cannot be settled until the members come to understand and appreciate the principles that govern them in this matter, as laid down in God's Word. All disciples of Christ are the stewards of God. The Savior taught this principle in the parable of the unjust steward. "If ye have not been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?" Paul declares that Christians are the property of God. "Ye are not your own." What we have in the way of property is not essentially ours. Tithing is a recognition of this principle. All we possess belongs to God, who has proprietorship in us. We are to give as the Lord prospers us. We are to give freely, according to our ability. "If there is first a readiness, it is acceptable, according as a man hath and not according as he hath not." There must also be equality in giving. Paul says it is not right for one to be oppressed and others to go free. It is not so in other organizations, where each man is expected to pay his equal portion of the expenses, and when he fails to pay his dues, his relation to that organization ceases.

Now, how is this proportion to be determined? If we are left to determine it ourselves, we are very apt to make two mistakes; first, to underestimate what we should give, and, second, to overestimate what our neighbor ought to give. It, therefore, should be left to some disinterested persons, such as the deacons, or what we would call an estimating committee, to make a fair and equitable apportionment. There is usually a class of professors in every church who think they are not responsible to anybody, except God, in their giving. "Nobody's business but mine and my God's," they say. That means that they will not give according to any plan or standard. How could a man be held accountable to the authorities of the church for all other sins he is guilty of and not be held accountable for this particular sin? For covetousness is sin, a grevious sin. Paul says that no covetous man shall inherit the kingdom of God. But who is covetous? Any member who purposely and persistently refuses to give any amount to the treasury of the church of which he is a member, surely belongs to that class of sinners. Ministers should be more faithful and tactful in dealing with this subject of giving from the pulpit.

Another essential in church organization is *faithfulness* to the brotherhood. We owe to every one in the brotherhood of the church the supreme service of helpfulness. There are various classes in the church that need help, such as the youth of our communion, the aged Christians among us, disconsolate members of the flock, who long for sympathy and succor, those who are fighting the hard battles of life and of self, the afflicted and suffering, those who are indifferent to the needs and claims of the church. These have a claim upon us through the relation of love in the brotherhood.

There are many who permit a few to carry the burdens of the church, doing nothing themselves to assist the

faithful ones. This is selfish and wrong. They refuse to give any money at all to carry forward the great enterprises of the kingdom of God through the agency of their own society. Serious results follow from this dereliction of duty. They cripple the power of the church to properly do the work of God. They do themselves a positive injury. They lose spiritual interest, joyous experience, and a worthy influence.

It is plainly the duty of the church to help men to a better way of living, to stimulate the spirit of liberality, and to lead them to a higher plane of practical Christianity.

The surprising announcement is made that scores and scores of church members pay nothing for the supporting of the gospel. Like the Corinthian church Christians, some promise but do not pay, and the church suffers, the work being hindered, to the perplexity and discouragement of the officials.

Now, what is needed is a revival of righteousness, of conscientiousness, of practical and Scriptural giving, of cheerful, "hilarious" giving; every member feeling an obligation to give something, however small it may be, and to give it for Jesus' sake. More and more is evident the necessity of this grace of liberality, by which every member shall march up to his duty and privilege of helping the church of God to fulfill her mission in the evangelization of mankind.

Paul presents a high motive for the exercise of this grace of liberality in giving. He held before his vision the example of God, the Father. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Then he translated it into words of praise, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." Finally he applied it specifically to Christians, "Ye know the

grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."

What a master artist Paul was! By a few strokes of his brush, he painted upon the canvas a perfect picture, in striking outline, of the example of Christ in his wondrous liberality.

With the cultivation of this grace of giving, the church would become more and more untrammeled in her efforts to save men and to carry the good news to the ends of the earth.

Besides faith and consecration, the great hindrance to the world's evangelism is the lack of money. It is the present great factor in the missionary problem, at home and abroad. Because of lack of funds and the burden of missionary society debts, men and women, called of God, are withheld and retained at home. Home and foreign missionary societies are compelled to retreat from the open doors to which God is pointing them. The gates of the world are open to the missionaries of the cross, but the means to send workers is lacking. Golden opportunities are open to the churches of America to evangelize the masses, but they are without the money to seize and take advantage of such opportunities.

The great need of to-day is faith in God; not so much in great machinery, more organization, external equipment, or the accumulation of money, but faith in God and the release of our present resources to do his will. What made the early church so powerful and effective? Surely not money, or machinery, or strong missionary boards, or stately churches, or social standing. It had little more than faith in God, that brought to his followers the consciousness of his presence. It performed miracles, even with its limited resources. The Christian church has grown into a mighty organization. It has reached

a high plane of corporate life and influence. It has resources enough, if released and properly directed, to save America, and through America, to carry the gospel to the whole world.

THE IDEAL HERO OF THE AGES.

Christ was the ideal hero of the ages. He wore the crown of a king and possessed the spirit of a knight. His whole life was a sublime illustration of giant manliness and superlative heroism. Every moment of his earth life was marked with an infinite sacrifice. The thought of sacrifice so burned into his young heart that it dominated his entire being, and led him to lay down his life for a great cause.

It is easy to discover the secret of his heroism. He was under the *mastery of a life-purpose.* A tremendous conviction gripped his soul. He was swept with the force of a mighty motive, that, like a resistless tide, bore him to the goal of his mission. He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. Calvary and the cross were ever before his vision. Even at the age of twelve, and more closely at thirty, this life-task filled him with boundless enthusiasm. At Jordan there fell upon him the baptism of a high purpose, that burned and glowed and marked every step of his march to the cross.

What a charming Hebrew youth Jesus was! He was a royal brother-man, a glorious hero. Neither personal ease, nor fame, nor aggrandizement was able to allure him from the path of duty and loyalty. Neither flattery, nor calumny, nor opposition, nor persecution, nor personal violence could deflect him from his life-task. Amid the thickening difficulties that beset his pathway, Jesus pressed on to triumph and success, until there rang out from the cross the note of victory, "It is finished!" The culminating joy of his ministry was the attainment of his life-purpose in the redemption of a lost world and the possible reformation of humanity.

Christ was not only an ideal hero, but he founded a *religion that inspires the highest and best type of heroism.* Christianity is the very soul of spiritual knighthood. It furnishes the elements of which heroes are made. It gives to men the moral muscle and fiber necessary to fight the battles of humanity. It clothes men with the panoply of the Christian warrior, and helps them, for righteousness' sake, to stand against the majority in the early advocacy of moral issues and principles.

When Garibaldi wanted volunteers he said to his soldiers: "I have nothing to offer you but rags, and hardships, and cold, and hunger. Let him that loves his country follow me." And the youth of Italy sprang to their feet and espoused his cause. So when Jesus said, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me," men accepted the conditions of his discipleship, and became brave, true, loyal soldiers of the cross. That was the beginning period of Christian heroism. Since that time men and women have taken up the banner of the cross, and have borne it into the hottest battles for humanity in all the lands of the earth. And whatever reflection men may put upon Christ and the Bible to-day, we gladly place the crown upon the brow of our common Christianity. It is altogether worthy of it. The spirit of redemption, of altruism, of brotherhood, of reform, and of individual and social regeneration is distinctly Christian. Christ himself breathed into the heart of humanity the spirit of benevolence, and poured upon the race, in floodtide, his passion of love for mankind.

And when we enter into any great reform movement for the betterment of men, we should always keep in mind the fact that *our cause is God's cause,* and that we are in partnership with him in the work of human redemption. No great moral reform enterprise can flourish

and triumph without the help of God. If we do not proceed upon this conception, with faith that God is in our work, we are sure to fail of final and full success. Undergirding every great reform for humanity is a moral issue. The recognition of that fact is a recognition of God, as all moral principle and obligation root back into the character of God as a moral being and moral governor.

The very nature and mission of Christianity call for the truest and best heroism. Christianity is both constructive and destructive. It is radical and revolutionary. It goes to the very core of things. It assumes a threatening attitude against evil. It stands in absolute and relentless antagonism to all injustice and wrongdoing. It lays the axe at the root of the tree. It is aggressive and uncompromising. It attacks the citadel of evil and hurls its weapon against its rampart. It raises the instrument of judgment against all unrighteousness. It holds in one hand a sharp, biting-edged instrument that hews to the ground, and in the other, one that prunes and trims in order to a better life and growth. Surely, Christianity is both destructive and constructive. Even Jesus, the Prince of Peace, announced that he came to bring a sword. John declared that Christ "came to destroy the works of the devil." He meant to teach that Jesus Christ came to set up the kingdom of God on earth; that that kingdom is the kingdom of righteousness and love; that to establish such a kingdom would eventuate in a real brotherhood in which men are bound together by the ties of mutual obligation and helpfulness. This is a sublime and stupendous task. But to accomplish it, Christianity must enter into every part and department of the individual and corporate life of mankind. This inevitably brings an issue. It means battle. War is declared at once. Conquest will not come without a fight. Passion, greed, cruelty, savagery, selfishness, and injustice must be over-

come and crushed out. All this fierce, hot conflict means loyalty, sacrifice, heroism.

Christian heroism always has a *vision of ultimate triumph,* but between the initiative and the final goal it counts upon long campaigns, persistent struggle and immense expenditure of brain, nerve, muscle, and will power. Jesus ever kept his eye upon Jerusalem. The shadow of the cross fell on every step he made in that direction. What a march that was! Long campaigns, persistent effort, a series of struggles, one continuous warfare! The battle of Golgotha was but the climax of the bitter, growing, Satanic hatred which Jesus met all along his dauntless march to Calvary. So every true life has its Jerusalem, its goal, its mission, toward which it directs its energies and for which it suffers.

Great reform movements also have their Jerusalem. It must be so. Take the Anti-Saloon League of America and kindred organizations. What is their Jerusalem? It is easily told. It is the utter annihilation of the liquor business and the complete elimination of the American saloon from every community in this country of ours by means of the enactment of an amendment to our Constitution, prohibiting the traffic, and by the individual cure of the drink habit. In addition are the preventive methods of scientific temperance instruction in our homes and churches. Such a mission is sane, patriotic, religious, statesmanlike, and self-preserving.

In reaching this Jerusalem of temperance success, we must believe in the final triumphant outcome of our cause. We must have faith in God as well as in men. We must endure as seeing him who is invisible. Christian faith toils, battles, and suffers in the conscious presence of God. It recognizes comradeship and partnership in life's problems and conflicts. Reforms triumph when their leaders act as in the presence of God. Above them is the inspir-

ing music of the voice of the ever-present Father. This is what makes heroes. It led Moses to turn his back upon the riches of Egypt and set his face like a flint to the promised land. It lifted Joseph to the throne and the summit of moral victory in a strange country. It clothed Daniel with a divine panoply that defied all the powers of darkness and the plottings of wicked men. It made St. Paul, that grand, old, battle-scarred missionary of the cross, an invincible warrior and a crowned knight. It led Luther, in the darkest hour of trial, to sing, "God is our refuge and fortress." It enabled John Wesley, in the closing hour of his life, to exclaim, "The best of all is, God is with us." It made Jesus the peerless hero and reformer of the ages. It will give us courage and optimism —a vision of better things and better times awaiting us and our country.

The battle for humanity is the greatest of all battles, and it appears that the fierceness of the conflict reaches the climax in the fight with rum. The contest is terrific even now, but the hottest of the fight is ahead of us. Mark it, no weapon in the hands of the enemy will be too deadly and dishonorable to use. Calumny, vituperation, conspiracy, violence, and bloodshed may stain the unholy hands of our foe. Ah! we are engaged in no trivial conflict. All the tact, shrewdness, and cunning generalship of Satanic intelligence will be summoned against us before this long campaign is over.

But, thank God! we are not on the losing side. Redemption time is near at hand. Already the dawn of a better day is upon us. To-morrow is full of golden promise. The forces of righteousness are gaining ground. The mighty currents of God's eternal purposes are sweeping on toward a glorious finality. Personal, social, and national conscience is being awakened as never before, and this awakening is helping more men to stand against

the evils and vices that bruise and hurt and crush our weaker brethren. We look forward to the time when our vessels on the high seas shall no longer carry the demons of opium and rum, with which to degrade and debauch the weaker races of men; when the last gin mill shall be put out of business and the last dram shop shall be closed, so that no more of our boys shall pass through the saloon and come forth drunkards, to darken happy homes and break mothers' hearts. When more men, especially in our churches, shall come out into the open and fight the fight of righteousness, clean government, and high moral ideas, and stand heroically for all the forces that make for the redemption of men and a better civilization.

Divine truth and divine love incarnated in human personality, and expressed in practical effort at the ballot-box and in the executive chair, will bring emancipation to our enslaved humanity. It will come as sure as God is true and almighty.

Then the heroism that will win in this fight includes the elements of *self-mastery*. "He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that ruleth a city." Self-control and self-conquest are achievements that do not come to weaklings and cowards. Jesus expressed a great truth, rarely understood, when he said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." He meant to teach that self-conquest is the only quality strong enough to win the world. Meekness is not weakness. Jesus was the meekest person that ever lived on earth, and yet he was strong in all the elements of his manhood. He never lost his self-poise amid the trials and tests that came to him. He was calm and dignified even when he poured forth a terrific flood of woes upon the hypocritical Jews and scheming Pharisees. Before the mob in Gethsemane, the jeering rabble in the presence of Pilate, the coward, Jesus stood, self-poised and dignified under the rule of his own

self-mastery. What majestic strength! What courageous meekness! That is the quality and temper of character that always wins in moral and spiritual warfare. Then even temporary defeat is but the hard, rough road over which the reformer passes to permanent and abiding success.

Who are the really strong men of earth? Not captains of finance; they are mad with the lust of greed. Not political rulers; they are wild with ambition. Not social leaders; they are intoxicated with pleasure. Not military chieftains; they are too often drunk with the passion of conquest. History records the pathetic fact that Alexander conquered all the world but himself. Poor weakling! He was the servile slave of his own appetites and passions. In the presence of his military glory, his own manhood lay prostrate in humiliating defeat. The strong, heroic men of this world are those who have the glory of self-conquest and the sweet consciousness of hidden power. These are the world's greatest heroes. Every reformer must stand watch over his inner life. His relations to God and men are under constant scrutiny; one blunder in moral life and conduct discounts him and weakens his cause. Here is where the enemy first attacks us. Judge Ben B. Lindsey tells how the hind claws of the political beast of Denver tried to reach and ruin him. The "gang" invited him to a certain house of evil, where they lay in wait to expose him as a libertine and thus break him down. Failing in that plot, they investigated his private life without success. Such sleuthing is going on all the time. It is not a comfortable sensation to know that we are watched, hunted, menaced, and threatened, but it is the enemy's method of warfare.

Here is where our Christian heroism is put to the test. While we hate and denounce the nefarious business of the enemy, yet we should be kind and compassionate to-

ward them. At the battle of Santiago Harbor, it is reported of Captain Philip, that when the wounded and dying sailors on the shattered vessels of the enemy were sinking to the bottom of the harbor, our sailor boys began to shout for victory, but the great-hearted captain was moved to tears, and he called to our men, "Boys, don't cheer, the poor fellows are dying." So in this great battle, we place our artillery in a position to shatter the saloon and the liquor traffic, and we will never cease firing until the enemy goes down in everlasting defeat and shame, but let us weep over and help to rescue the army of saloonists, brewers, and distillers, and their families, who are going down to a hell of unspeakable infamy and ruin.

Then there must be *courageous adherence to the principles and moral issues* of a great cause like this. Loyalty to moral principles is the greatest of all virtues. This requires manhood of oaklike, stalwart type; men of nerve and granite, which Christianity alone can produce. Living for a moral principle is as great a virtue as dying for it. It takes a great, heroic soul to resist the temptation to violate his own conscience under pressure.

Lincoln, at Independence Hall, Philadelphia, on his way to his inauguration, pointing to the flag, said, "Before I would dishonor the flag, I'd lose my arm." Some men laugh at such statements and make the insinuating remark that "every man has his price." Ingersoll once declared that a man would be a fool to die for a principle or a cause. That might be true from the standpoint of an agnostic, but not from the standpoint of a Christian. The best product of Christianity is Christian manhood and womanhood, and it reaches the climax of its glory in the moral heroism of its devotees. History is replete with shining examples of men who stood by a moral principle to the end. Luther, knowing the church was wrong, stood

for truth and conscience against the anathemas of his enemies. Lincoln was once asked to take the wrong side of a case in law, but he replied: "I cannot do it. All the time while talking to the jury, I should be thinking, 'Lincoln, you're a liar, you're a liar.' I believe I should forget myself and say it out loud." That's the kind of robust manliness the times are calling for. King's men doing the King's business and making their manhood count; moral and spiritual heroes who are pushing the kingdom of God and righteousness into the realm of citizenship, commercial life, civic affairs, moral reform, and every movement looking to a better social order and a higher civilization. Clean, able trustworthy leadership, and sterling, unselfish personality back of any great moral movement are the truest source of its strength and the surest guarantee of its success. Let it be written in letters of fire that character is service, being is doing, Christian manhood is the best capital that can be invested in a great cause.

Then we must never forget that the strongest winning force in all reform work is the element of *sacrifice*. There is no way of success except through hardship and suffering. If America shall ever be redeemed from the curse of the liquor traffic, not only the country towns and communities must be kept "dry," but the cities, the controlling factors and the nerve centers of our Nation, must be the objects of a long, persistent, tremendous campaign for righteousness and better moral standards. But to do this we must pay the cost. We all know that sacrifice is the price of human progress and blessing. Every moral enterprise has its Calvary. Every movement that blesses mankind requires the pouring out of the heart-blood of its devotees. Every triumph in reform in all the centuries of the past has had the ring of battle out of which true

heroes have come, bearing the scars of conflict and carrying the marks of the derision and contempt of majorities.

Truly, sacrifice is the law of our civilization and the price of human progress. It bore Jesus to the cross. It carried Paul in chains to Rome. It took John to Patmos. It brought Lincoln to assassination. It led George C. Haddock to martyrdom and Senator Carmack to an untimely death. We may count upon it, that he who goes forward into the hot firing line of this reform is certain to pass through some Gethsemane and ascend some Calvary. He will march straight to some cross. He will be lonely at times, for he will be with the few. The crowd will pass by on the other side. He will often feel the sting of disloyalty and the chill of popular disfavor and misrepresentation.

The history of the temperance movement, from the beginning, shows that it is a glorious work, but it is costly. The church united against the saloon is simply Christianity in its aggressive, constructive, reformatory work for the redemption of humanity. There can be no compromise, no retreat, no faltering, if we are true and loyal to our fellowmen. There is but one issue: *The liquor business must die.* The saloon infamy must be wiped out. The ax has lain long enough at the root of this upas tree. God's hand is already uplifted, and he will hew it down soon if we will only do our part.

Yes, the work of reform is costly, but it pays superlatively to rescue and redeem humanity and help to safeguard our weaker brethren with helpful and wholesome environment. Our reward comes with the joy of victory that is sweeping over the States of our Union. Marvelously is our cause marching on. But our greatest reward will come in the profound consciousness of heroic, unselfish service, faithfully performed in the interest of the emancipation of our fellowmen.

Everybody knows of the sacrifice and suffering of Florence Nightingale for the wounded and dying soldiers in the Crimean War. After the war closed all the veterans of that war were gathered at a banquet and were asked to write upon a card the name that they loved most in connection with that conflict. When the cards came in, the only name that appeared was that of Florence Nightingale. What a tribute and reward to that noble heroine! Such immortality of influence is sufficient reward.

The story of Ed and Will Spencer, of the Northwestern University, at Evanston, is familiar. They belonged to the Volunteer Life Service Company. The *Lady Elgin* went down between Chicago and Milwaukee. Will and Ed Spencer stood on the lake shore and saw the passengers struggling with the angry waves. Ed Spencer, being a brave swimmer, plunged into the lake and pushed out to the struggling ones and brought one after another to the shore until he had rescued fifteen. Then he saw two more men in a death-struggle with the waves, and pushed out and brought them in—seventeen in all. But he was exhausted and almost gone. His brother Will carried him to his room in the college, and when Ed regained consciousness, he said to his brother, "Did I do my best?" Some years ago Doctor Torrey told that story in Los Angeles. Just as he had finished it, some one shouted, "Ed Spencer is in this house." Doctor Torrey asked him to come to the front, and when that old water hero reached the altar, Torrey put his arms around him, while the audience was melted into sobs and tears. Afterwards Ed Spencer whispered to a friend, "It is forty-seven years to-day since I rescued those seventeen persons, but of all that number, not one of them has ever thanked me." So we may be misunderstood and maligned and unappreciated in the heroic service we per-

form for the deliverance of enslaved, rum-cursed humanity, but our reward is certain in the consciousness of loyalty to conviction and fidelity to a worthy cause.

If we put into our lifework that which cannot be taken out of it, personality, faith, courage, love, sympathy, heroism—imperishable elements—then, when the conflict is over and the smoke of the battle has cleared away, we shall look up into the face of our God, in the presence of those whom we have helped on earth, and exclaim, "Father, I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

"If thou can'st plan a noble deed,
And never flag till it succeed,
Though in the strife thy heart should bleed,
Whatever obstacles control,
Thine hour will come. Go on, true soul,
Thou'lt win the prize, thou'lt reach the goal."

THE NEW EVANGEL.

This subject has the peril of a misnomer, and yet, since certain distinguished religious leaders and thinkers have coined the expression, it deserves recognition. The term, "New Evangel," as representing the New Theology, is thoroughly human. It is an earthly product. It disclaims antiquity and boasts of innovation. The prophets of this theology claim that it is a new antidote for sin and the dissolvent of all the problems and ills of this life. They discard the supernatural element in religion, the full inspiration and authority of the Bible, and the deity of Jesus Christ. They deny the fact of divine retribution, in its true New Testament sense, recognize no supreme authority over the kingdom of evil, magnify human reason, relegate faith to an inferior place in Christian experience, minify the fact and power of the inner divine life, and proclaim the supremacy of moral influence in the atonement of Christ.

This sounds well and is attractive to the popular mind. Dr. Arthur T. Pierson has given the best epitome of this system in what he denominates "The Five Points of the New Theology":

1. The universal Fatherhood of God, and, consequently, the brotherhood of man, independent of redemption in Christ.

2. Christ, the perfection of humanity, a martyr to truth, and an example for imitation, but not a vicarious Savior.

3. Sin, a misfortune and a disease, possibly a necessity to the attaining of perfection; a fall forward.

4. Salvation by character, and universal destiny an evolution toward perfection here and hereafter.

5. The Bible, the best of books, inspired, but not infallible or inerrant, dependent for authority upon the attestation of conscience.

This is substantially the form and substance of the "New Evangel," with other unique features growing out of the idiosyncrasies of men.

Now, in our attitude to this new theology, we should be fair and generous. We should not become dogmatic and intolerant, for it evidently contains some truth mixed with error. Neither should we despise the spirit and motive which have led to this extreme; for honest men have seen great changes going on in social, intellectual, and industrial life. Close students have studied present-day problems and their remedy. They have witnessed the soul-hunger of the world and the evidences of religious decadence, and it is but just to allow that this new theology represents the tendency and struggle of a certain class of honest religious leaders to solve the problem of reaching men, by meeting this changed condition of things.

But, whatever may be their candor and sincerity, surely they have committed a serious blunder in *changing the message*.

The objection to this "New Evangel" is twofold: It *depreciates the value of the minister's vocation.* This is the one thing to be guarded against in these times. Young men often fail to reach up to the true conception of the dignity and influence of the Christian ministry. The ministry is a vocation and not a profession. Men are called of God to this work. This divine selection is a high distinction and honor. It has no equal in the earth. No position in human government can compare with the honor of being an embassador of Christ. He who holds this position wields a mighty scepter, because he is a representative of the authority and power of the government

of God. Jesus said to his disciples, "All authority hath been given to me, both in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This is the evangel to preach, and this is the authority for announcing it. Let any one vitiate this message or change it for another, that moment he degrades his calling and shows disloyalty to Christ.

There is absolutely no need of a new evangel. The supreme need is a higher appreciation of the infinite richness, charm, and power of the old evangel, handed down to man from God. The pulpit is the richest field for thought, influence, and achievement. It affords a magnificent opportunity for a young man to become eminent. If he would be a powerful factor in shaping the character of our civilization that is within his grasp. It is a well-known fact in history that the prevailing characteristics of any age or country have been determined by the preaching of that age and country. The conversion of the Roman world to Christianity was due chiefly to the preaching of the gospel, while the general disuse of preaching in the apostolic church led to formality and corruption. In all ages, whenever the pulpit has been timid, lax, and patronizing, the moral tone of the community has been lowered and the public conscience has been more or less paralyzed, but when the prophets of God preached the evangel in all its fullness and authority and made the pulpit their throne, then there went out a strange influence that awakened the moral sense of men, moved their hearts, restrained and inspired their lives, and became a mighty factor for morality, righteousness, and good government. The great spiritual truths of the gospel are the most potent promoters of true civilization. It was Shaftsbury who said that Charles Spurgeon, without discussing the problems of government, had done more for social reform and progress than any statesman

of his time. John Ruskin measured the power of the pulpit in modern life when he said, "Precious, indeed, those thirty minutes by which the teacher tries to get at the separate hearts of a thousand men to convince them of all their weaknesses, to shame them for all their sin, to warn them of all their dangers, to try, by this way and that, to stir the hard fastenings of the doors, where the Master himself has stood and knocked, yet none opened, and to call at the openings of those dark streets, where Wisdom herself hath stretched forth her hand, and no man regarded. Thirty minutes to raise the dead in!" The brilliant Doctor Hillis has truly said, "He who hath known the joy of encouraging some noble youth who is discouraged; the rapture that comes when one who hath been long snared and held in a cruel trap hath been freed; the joy of feeling that blind eyes have come to see things unseen, and deaf ears to hear notes that once were unheard; or hath swung wide some dungeon door to lead forth some prisoner of conscience, will know that there is no profession that conceals such hidden springs, receives such hidden messages, is fed with such buoyancy and happiness, as the ministry—the Christian teacher, who brings divine truth to men for God's sake and man's sake."

These are noble words, because they indicate the happiness, opportunity, and grandeur of him who announces the evangel.

Christ has put into the hands of his ambassadors eternal truths, and these are the mightiest stimulus to all that is good, great, and abiding in this complex life. The burden of the evangel includes the greatest themes of life—God, Christ, conscience, sin, salvation, personal character, duty, immortal destiny. These burning truths should never be discounted or neglected. The moment the minister changes his message, that moment his throne totters, his power is broken, and his scepter falls.

The second objection to the "New Evangel" is that it *discounts the message itself*. Whatever does that, disqualifies the messenger and robs him of moral power over men. Let the messenger have personal liberty in changing the emphasis, if he choose, but he dare not change the message itself, for the least modification of it discredits his own God-given theme. The messenger, whether he be apostle, prophet, pastor, evangelist, or teacher, is God's man, with God's message. He is simply the mouthpiece of God. Says Dr. Joseph Parker, "The men who have experienced the profoundest influence in the Christian pulpit are men who have kept most strictly and fervently to the declaration that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Describing his own experience, Doctor Parker has said: "I recall with vividness three periods in my evolution as a preacher. First, the period when I revelled in climaxes and in general verbal thunder—a very young experience. Second, the period when I began to think more of the things I said than the way of saying them—a distinct advance. Third, the period when I clearly saw that I had not to invent a gospel, but to preach one—the greatest advance of all."

What we need is not a new evangel, but the old evangel told with a new tone, a new emphasis, and a new value; the evangel of Christ, not of human construction, but a divine revelation, perfect, complete, unalterable, authoritative, and invincible.

This means the *Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man in and through the redemption of Christ.* It means Jesus Christ the divine-human Savior, our Elder Brother, very God and very man; the recognition of sin as the destructive foreign element in the soul, and the utter helplessness and hopelessness of man in sin without God in Christ Jesus; sin that separates from God and brings moral catastrophe and ruin. It means the

salvation of the whole man through personal faith in Christ, spiritual union with the risen, living Lord, who is present with his disciples in the sweet consciousness of divine comradeship. It is an evangel, not new in its contents, purpose, and power, but increasingly new in the unfolding of its exhaustless hidden beauties and in the fresh discovery of the richer treasures that lie deep beneath the surface.

Professor Henry Drummond evidently reached the true solution in what he denominates "The New Evangelism." This is probably the best expression of the freshest Christian thought of to-day. It is a safe, conservative position. While it does not cling to the musty theology of the past, it does not accept the audacity and peril of the "New Theology." Holding still to the old evangel, it emphasizes the importance of an evangelism suited to present-day demands and conditions. Hence, the great leaders in religious effort, at the present time, are beginning to lay the emphasis, not upon a new evangel, but upon what may be called the new evangelism, which means that the great facts of the Bible shall be presented in present-day form and language, and that the essential truths of the message shall be put in a garb which the present age will recognize.

This evangelism includes the following elements:

The *announcement of living, independent truth.* This is found only in the Word of God. Outside of that, truth, however valuable and beautiful it may be, is lifeless. What is known as "systematic theology" should not be depreciated, for it has its essential place and importance in religious thought and church life; neither should creeds be condemned, for they are educative and guiding; but Scripture truth crowded into rigid propositional form, and thus conveyed to the people, is dead. Truth put into theology is of necessity "cut and dried," and while

we admire a theology which contains the best results of the life-long study and investigation of ripe and profound Christian scholarship, it nevertheless has a formality not found in the Scriptures. Truth in theology and creeds is useful, but it is bound, hampered, and imprisoned, if announced in that form. It is this crystallization that squeezes all the life out of it. If preached in that form, the evangel loses much of its freshness and charm. It would be better for one to get his theology twisted, once in a while, than to be enslaved by set, credal phrases and stereotyped propositional statements. Theology is a book, the Bible is a fountain. It is a book of life, as well as the book of law. What we get out of theology is, in a sense, lifeless; what we draw from the Bible is living truth. It possesses inherent energy. It is a well of living water, ever springing up into larger life with increasing charm and beauty.

This differentiates the Bible from all other books and makes it the power of God unto salvation to all who believe.

Then, this gospel has the merit of being *original, first-hand, independent truth.* It dare not be bound. It has the touch of life and must grow in human conception and appreciation. If it is crowded into and imprisoned in a human creed, it becomes mummy-like and loses its power.

The Bible is an independent book, and when the church comes to it with the claim of infallibility of interpretation, every honest, loyal, growing Bible student enters a protest. Doctor Drummond expressed it aptly in declaring that "infallibility paralyzes." If truth is put in human symbols and form, with the claim that nothing can be added to it, then its life ends and it becomes a mere skeleton. This evangelism gets its truth first-hand. It acknowledges no authority and infallibility except the authority and infallibility of revealed truth, unbound and

free. It gets the bread direct from the Divine Hand, and gives it out fresh and simple to the waiting, hungry multitudes. It is as far from dogma as the East is from the West, and seeks only to unfold and proclaim the principles of the kingdom under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. It is the freedom of faith, with a present voice, announcing the evangel of living, inspiring, triumphant truth; and this is what the world is waiting to hear.

Then, this evangelism includes the *gospel of essential spirituality*. The gospel is not only the truth, but it is the truth as revealed in Jesus Christ. Christ is back of the printed Word. Christ, himself, is the Word. He is a deeper and larger revelation of the Father than mere human language could possibly indicate. The incarnation is the fullest revelation of God to man. Jesus warned his disciples against the idolatry of the mere letter of the Word, hence, he cast off the lifeless, burdensome ceremonialism of his time. He would have his disciples break the shell and get hold of the life within it. He would have them transpierce the form and get the living reality beneath it. Christianity is more than form, or creed, or profession, or ritualism, or organization. Form is essential, but it must be vitalized by the spirit of God. Creeds are guiding and educative, but they must be deeper than the paper on which they are printed. Profession is worthy, but it is hollow without the inner divine life, which it is supposed to represent. Ritualism is beautiful and charming, but it is vain without the "hidden life." Even church organization is cumbrous without vitality and divine energy back of it. The new evangelism emphasizes the deeper thought that Christianity is a divine life as well as a system of truth. It is divine vitality, independent of forms and symbols, and yet operating through them as channels of power and blessing. The clarion voice of Jesus ringing down the centuries comes with a

tremendous present emphasis, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

This evangelism also lays *emphasis on fundamentals.* We are living in good times. The age is overarched with the rainbow of hope. The new century is radiant with the incoming glory of our King. The light of the larger teaching of Christ is dawning upon us more and more. Non-essentials are sinking out of sight. Denominational barriers are disappearing and the different members of the body of Christ are converging toward the realization of a great brotherhood of fellowship in worship, service, aim, and effort, for the promotion of the kingdom of God in the earth.

The times demand all the combined energies of the church of Christ. We dare not waste our strength on shallow differences and non-essentials. The forces of the enemy are mighty and determined, and we need to meet them with a united front. All the minor phases of our ecclesiastical machinery and administration have dropped into an inferior place, and only the great fundamental, pivotal, vital, eternal truths of the kingdom are emphasized.

We are beginning to come out of a great crisis in Christian thought and teaching, and we are coming out on the right side. I mean by this that the greatest religious leaders of to-day are laying the stress on the great doctrines of the evangel. It is asserted that the people are weary of doctrinal preaching. Surely this is a mistake. They may be weary of the musty cant and dull garb in which doctrines are sometimes presented, but there never was a time when the great truths of the kingdom were more popular than to-day. People are hungry for the fundamental doctrines of the Word, such as the Fatherhood of God, the divinity of Christ, the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit, the resurrection from the

dead, justification, regeneration, heart-purity, the witness of the Spirit, the heinousness of sin and salvation from it, divine retribution, the immortality of the soul, and the final reward of the righteous. These are eternal verities, which command attention, grip the conscience, and inspire the lives of men.

There has been a great revolution in preaching during the past quarter of a century. Preachers of the preceding generation portrayed the destructiveness of sin and its awful penalties. They called men to repent in view of the future life. Now they are urged to good lives for the sake of the present time. It is regarded now as unscientific and in bad taste to appeal to the sinner on the ground of the doom that awaits the impenitent. They preach the gospel of ethics—live a good life here and the future will take care of itself. Is not this kind of preaching unscientific? Is not this one reason why the church has lost its hold on men? Such preaching falls on deaf ears and ends with empty pews.

If the doctrine of divine retribution is a dead letter and the warnings of Jesus are obsolete, then why go to church at all? Why not lay aside the Ten Commandments and disregard the religion of our fathers? Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman once preached in Chicago upon the searching themes of God's Word. He made men wince under his loving arraignment of sin. He plainly declared there is only one way to hell—that is sin, and there is only one way to heaven—that is Christ. As he presented the great truths and solemnities of God's Word with a loving heart and tender words, he was listened to with profound interest. The writer heard him preach to a great multitude of men upon the prodigal son, and, when he said, "The people like to hear the old truths of the Word, and I like to tell them," a thousand men applauded him.

The editor of the *Chicago Inter-Ocean,* commenting upon the awakening in Chicago, speaking from a layman's viewpoint, said: "The preacher who seems to be getting the most immediately visible results, is one who does not hesitate to appeal to fear—to tell people they are lost and must go to hell if they reject God. On Sunday, this preacher drew a striking picture of the terrors of the last judgment, and fifty men present asked for prayers that they might be saved from their sins.

"Really, it passes lay comprehension, how any preacher of love alone can be satisfied with the peace that his preaching may bring to his own soul, when he reads the story of the crucifixion. Did Jesus suffer upon the cross merely to go his way rejoicing, wrapped in the self-complacency of good intentions? Was his dying cry one of faith in a God of love, or did it express fear of a God of justice, in whose sight shall no man living be justified? Yet we reverence him as the Perfect Man!

"In view of the concurrent testimony of revelation and science, that the consequences of sin in punishment can be foretold more positively than the consequences of righteousness in reward, the preacher who refuses to appeal to fear in the cause of his Master must be asked, 'Why do you preach?' "

No man will ever be a powerful preacher who does not get at the conscience. Jesus touched the conscience of the woman of Samaria until her soul was smitten with guilt and her face was blanched with fear. Paul attacked the conscience of Felix and made him quake on the throne, as he reasoned of sin and righteousness and the judgment to come. There is desperate need of telling men in the plainest possible terms what they are, what they ought to do, and what they ought to be—what they can be through the might of God's grace and truth. Bishop Gilbert Haven's dying words to a friend were, "Preach a

whole Christ, a whole gospel, a whole heaven, a whole hell, a whole Bible." To another he said, "Stand by the whole church," and to yet another he said, "The first Sunday of the New Year I shall spend in glory."

Then, this new evangelism allows a *legitimate place for feeling in Christian life and effort.* In announcing the evangel, everything depends upon where the emphasis is placed. If the stress is laid wholly upon the intellect, then the fires of effective evangelism die out. For, whatever may be claimed for the educational method, it fails to bring the soul into conscious, personal acquaintance with God. This is its constant danger and fault. On the other hand, if the emphasis is placed wholly upon the emotional, then there is no sure foundation upon which to build our spiritual structure and no anchor to hold the vessel in a stormy sea. Both extremes are to be avoided.

We are living in an age of inquiry concerning the aim of religious effort and the method of spiritual achievement. Earnest Christian workers view the world in its awful soul-hunger. They see the need and the remedy. Now, the vital question arises, Where shall we place the weight of the emphasis? Surely upon the emotional in its best and highest sense. The word "intuitional" might be more accurate, or the word "mystical" is still better, and yet neither term quite expresses the thought in view. The word "spiritual" is, perhaps, the best term. A spiritual ministry and a spiritual church is the great need of Christendom. And this is all-inclusive, taking in all the elements of our spiritual being—intellect, will, conscience, feeling—the whole man in living, conscious, personal relation to God.

The moment you discount emotion and religious fervor and intensity, you destroy the fuel that keeps alive the fires of a powerful evangelism. President King, of Oberlin College, who is characteristically intellectual, and,

in his make-up, farthest from the emotional, says: "We must not forget that it is pre-eminently through feeling that the sense of reality of all things comes. We cannot afford to ignore or underestimate feeling in the religious life, as much as we deplore its excesses and an undue appeal to it. Feeling has a large, legitimate, and important place in religion, as in all life. Let us only remember that the very possibility of any self-consciousness of any moral life and of any sense of reality, depends upon it. Our motives, too, get strong hold upon us commonly through some feeling. . . . We do not shrink in other spheres of life in music, literature, art, friendship—from feeling arising normally in the presence of great realities and values. We may not shrink from feeling similarly arising in religion. And the importance of feeling for religion as giving the sense of reality and giving powerful motives for action, cannot wisely be overlooked."

Professor Clark, of Colgate University, in his recent work on Christian theology, in speaking of the Holy Spirit and the divine life in man, says: "The fact is often overlooked that the Spirit leads into the new life less by the way of thinking than by the way of feeling. We easily overestimate the intellectual element here. We often suppose that truth benefits a man chiefly through his thinking about it; whereas it does not bring him its richest benefit at all, until he begins to feel in view of it. It is in the heart, not in the head, that regeneration is wrought, and the way of feeling, the heart, the emotional, the affectional life is the Spirit's way of approach to it. Hence, the prominence of emotion in the history of religion and the indispensableness of warm, emotional life in all effective, triumphant Christianity."

St. Paul is a splendid example of how Christianity lays hold of all parts of the inner being—conscience, will, intellect, and emotion. Paul was particularly strong in

intellectual acumen. He possessed a massive brain, which Christianity gripped, illumined, and inspired. The gospel came to him as the message of truth, and this gave him intense intellectual satisfaction. And yet Paul had a great heart that burned and throbbed and glowed with the love of God. It is, indeed, remarkable how often he appears in the emotional mood. He was often bathed in tears. His heart was all aglow with the love of Christ. His ministry was one of tearful warning. He reminded the Ephesian elders that he had served the Lord among them with great tenderness, and had not ceased to warm them day and night with tears. His affection for his converts was so great that he bound to him troops of young men who were willing to die for him. He even won the hearts of the older people so thoroughly that in a farewell service they all wept sore and fell on his neck and kissed him and sorrowed as if their hearts would break, because they would see his face no more. Paul mastered the message and the message mastered him, until he made it burn and glow and grip with the fire and force of his own loving heart. One is utterly surprised that a man of such intellectual superiority should possess such a tender heart. Some one has called him the man of tears, and designated this as the key to his character.

A number of us once listened to Dr. G. Campbell Morgan in a series of addresses. One listener declared, "He is a splendid Baptist." Another, "He talks like a good Presbyterian." Another thought, "He must be a royal Methodist." Another said, "He is an ideal Congregationalist." And the writer was constrained to say, "He is surely a typical United Brethren." This was, indeed, a high compliment, for when a man sweeps the entire gamut of Christian thought and feeling, and allows a legitimate place for all the elements that enter into a life of self-consciousness, then he represents an evangel-

ism that meets the needs of this age, and, indeed, every age. How dare we ignore the religion of self-consciousness, which finds its highest type of life and worship in the emotional or spiritual? This divine life in the soul, swaying the whole being, this conscious, personal relation to God, is the great thing to be emphasized.

Do not misunderstand the author upon this point. He would not deny the will and intellect their high position of measureless value in the religious life. The will is the master power that determines personal choice and action. There are intellectual phases of religious truth that must be weighed by the mind. This is essential to an intelligent, normal, vigorous, heroic Christianity. But what is contended for, is, that in the last analysis of religious life, in winning men to God, the heart is supreme above the intellect and will. It takes the highest seat on the throne. God's way of entering the soul is through the gateway of the heart. And, when once within, of course, the citadel of the will must be captured before the victory is complete. No person is really won to God, until the will surrenders to him. If we would win souls to Christ, we must enter through the heart-gate. This was Spurgeon's great power as a soul-winner. It was the secret of Moody's marvelous success in bringing multitudes of all classes and ranks into the kingdom. Some one has said that this heart-gate "swings at the lightest touch of infant fingers." "The bungling hand of a tyro in the pulpit, if he but touch it, will gain admittance." The heart is the queen of all the powers of the soul, and when that is touched with divine force, then comes the joy, enthusiasm, and power of a conscious, personal experience.

Let a man intelligently get down beneath all form and back of all signs to the reality; let him come face to face with the unseen, then there comes to him the overshadowing sense of the divine personality. This is a blessed

experience. This divine touch quickens and warms every fiber of the spiritual being. It is this getting into the living current that makes us feel the tides of divine life and love flowing in the soul. And this is the experience out of which all the great psalms, hymns, prayers, and heroism of the ages have been born. It was this divine quickening and enthusiasm, mounting up to great heights of vision and purpose, that made such spiritual giants as Bernard, Fenelon, Knox, Wesley, Whitefield, Otterbein, Payson, Finney, and Moody. It is this deeper, divine life that sweeps all the keys of mind, will, and heart, and brings to the soul the sweet melody of heaven. It is this that brings spiritual awakenings and times of refreshing. Without it there can be no heroism, no missionary enterprise, no evangelistic aggressiveness and great soul-winning.

Evidently, the difficulty lies with the heart-life of the church. We have discussed creeds and heresies, orthodoxy, church union, ecclesiastical polity, and methods of administration, all of which are important, but the emphasis now needs to be placed upon the richer, spiritual life of the church. We need to recognize and teach that Christ came, as he said, not only to give life, but to make life "more abundant." He came to awaken, quicken, uplift, save the whole man, to give him a new life, a new power, a new love, a new joy, a new impulse, a new enthusiasm and a new goal. He came to sanctify and enlarge life, not to dwarf, but to develop it; not to make man less, but to make him more; not to burden him with rules, but to give him the freedom of the spirit; not to hold him down to the earth, but to make him a child of God, with all the freedom of sonship and the joy of conscious, divine comradeship. What this perishing world needs is not only light, but heat; not only coldness of intellectuality, but the warmth of spirituality; not human

philosophy, but the bread of life. Instead of listening to the theories of men, we need to keep our ear close to the heart of Christ.

The fires of evangelism need rekindling in the pulpit, else the church will lose her mission to the unsaved. And it must not be turned over to special evangelists, except as they help to train and lead the regular ministry back to this, the grandest of all work. Either the fires of evangelism must burn brighter in all the pulpits, or the church will suffer spiritual decadence and loss. Says Doctor Watson: "When the evangel ceased or fell into contempt, the church grew weak and corrupt. When the evangel asserted its ancient authority, the church arose and put on its 'beautiful garments.'"

Effective modern evangelism sounds the *note of certainty*. Human language has much to do with the effectiveness of the divine message. Seasoned speech carries the truth home to the heart and conscience. The evangel is so precious that it deserves to be told with tongues of fire and with all the weapons that can be gathered from the divine armory. Under felicitous phraseology, the truth cuts like a sharp blade, shines like the stars, burns like the sun, heals like salve, transforms like the light, and lifts the soul on the wings of imagination, until it soars like the lark and sings like the nightingale. A recent writer beautifully describes how Joseph Parker and Alexander Maclaren exhibit the truth. Maclaren lifts the flowers at your feet and shows all common things aflame with God. Parker pulls the stars down closer to you, that you might see how God held them in his hand."

But, more powerful than diction, is the tone of conviction with which the message is uttered. The Christian teacher must be positive. He must know and believe the truth he presents. He who does not know that the cross

is the panacea for all world troubles and the resolvent of all problems, who is not sure that the old evangel is the revealed will of God and is sufficient and efficient to meet the needs of this perishing world, has lost the inspiration of an apostle and the authority which gives power to the message. The great preachers of to-day are not apologists, but apostles and prophets of God. They do not defend the gospel, but proclaim it. The truth needs no defense, it will take care of itself.

Christ never stood on the defensive. He spoke with strange authority. He gave definite, positive, decisive, final truth. Doctor Parker has called him the "Incarnate Amen of God." This is a striking designation of the positiveness of Christ's ministry. In him all the statements of God's Word are yea and amen. Jesus did not come to perplex us with doubts and conjectures, but to give the sense of certainty and assurance. And this everlasting affirmation, or "amen" of Christ, is the immovable rock upon which we securely stand amid the storms, conflicts, and burdens of life. The world is suffering from soul-hunger and spiritual famine. Men do not want the husks of speculation; they want the bread of life. We are to give it to them with the tone of authority and the joy of personal assurance.

The human heart, bruised, burdened, and restless, craves divine certitudes. It wants to stand on eternal verities and to be sure that the rock beneath it can never be moved. Said Goethe, "If you have convictions, I will listen, but keep back your doubts to yourself." Said Daniel Webster, "In the house of God, I want to meditate upon the simple verities and the undoubted facts of religion, not up mysteries and speculation."

Professor Humphrey, of Lane Seminary, from his dying couch, sent the following farewell message to the students: "Tell the students that the theology of the heart

is the only theology that has power, and that this theology comes from contact with a living, personal Christ. If they could preach Christ as I now think I could preach him, if I were restored, it would almost be worth their while to pass through this which I am now experiencing."

The last moments of the sainted Bishop Weaver were made radiant with a triumphant testimony, which still thrills and inspires the heart of our Zion. With his feet already in the waters of Jordan, he sent back this glorious message to the Church: "I have no doubt as to the truth of the gospel of JesusChrist, I preached what I believed, and believed what I preached. I die in the faith of the gospel I preached. I feel perfectly safe. I shall see the King in his beauty."

It is said that down at the mouth of the Columbia River, there is an iron buoy, anchored solidly in the bed of the ocean, for the safety of the mariner. The sailor sails past this buoy on his voyage, and travels around the globe and comes back after years to be greeted by the same buoy, keeping its immovable watch. Since he last saw it, the drift and float of a hundred storms have washed past it, out into the sea. And yet that buoy remains, because it is anchored to the solid rock in the ocean bed. So it is with our Christ and his evangel. While the speculations and theories of men and false religions are swept away in the storms of the ages, the power and influence of Jesus still abide. Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He lives, reigns, saves, and inspires now as he did twenty centuries ago. He is in the very heart of his church to-day. He is the source of her life and the secret of her heroism and triumph. He is the soul of all missionary enterprise and evangelistic aggressiveness. His power grips the world and his religion satisfies the hunger and thirst of the human heart. He inspires brotherhoods and philan-

thropies, and excites all the sweet and tender ministries of life. He breaks the power of lust and passion, and transforms the demon into a child of God. He changes the rough, unsightly stone into a gem and makes it burn and shine and glow like the splendor of a sunset.

This is the best age of all ages in which to live and to present the glory of the evangel to the waiting multitudes. Let us catch the vision of Paul, the grand, old, Christian apostle and warrior, who, being filled with a spiritual passion and compassion, exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ!" Take up the old evangel and tell it out in a new garb, with a new tone, a new emphasis, and a new meaning, until dim eyes shall see its beauty, dull ears shall hear the melody of its music, cold hearts shall be melted with its love, and darkened souls shall be radiant with its divine light. Above all, tell it with the mighty power of a consecrated personality and with the mute eloquence of a transfigured life.

OUR CHURCH'S APPEAL TO YOUNG MEN.

This is an age of testing. Traditional authority and influence are on the wane. Old, dusty records have but little weight with those who have the passion of achievement. Antiquity is no fair measurement of virtue. Neither is innovation a convincing argument of real merit. Men think for themselves. They are original, independent, insistent, aggressive; they chafe under the humdrum grinding of mere routine; they revolt against the egotism of dogmatic utterance, and repudiate the tyranny of mere officialism. They claim the right to analyze, compare, and put their own seal upon any given proposition or movement. History has its place and value; but historical elements may or may not have lost their savor. Whether we would have it so or not, it is nevertheless true that every organization and movement laying claim to present endorsement and support must, first of all, pass into the crucible of the keen, incisive, scrutinizing judgment of the living present for analysis and testing.

Christian denominations are no exception to this demand. Every one of them must confront a challenge. The challenge comes in this form: What are its present credentials? What are its appealing merits? What are the signs of its virility? Using a commercial phrase, "Is it making good?" What right has it to continued existence? Why should men, especially young men, in this day and generation, devote their talents and energy in its communion? These are candid and fair propositions respecting the claims of our own denomination. I shall attempt to answer them with equal candor and fairness. The particular proposition which I shall discuss is, the

ground of our Church's appeal for the devotion of our young men.

The first point strikes at the very core of the matter. *Our denomination occupies a legitimate place in the historic church of Christ.* What determines the right of denominational existence? Surely not numerical strength, nor social influence, nor the prestige of wealth, nor antiquity of origin. These are mere accidents, not essentials. Otherwise Judaism and Mohammedanism and Buddhism would take the precedence of Christianity in its earlier manifestations.

A denomination that bears the seal of God upon it must be a child of Providence and represent the aim and spirit of Christ in the evangelization of the world. I am simply stating a fact when I declare that the incipience and evolution of our Church are clearly providential, as much so as any other evangelical denomination that came into existence in the eighteenth century. Just as in all great movements, God lays the burden of a great work upon some man's heart, and gives him a divine impulse that drives him to the accomplishment of that task, so God raised up Otterbein, that splendid German knight, to stand for personal holiness and spiritual Christianity in America. Church historians tell us of the low ebb at which Otterbein found church life in this country when he came here as a young missionary. Such was the state of lifeless formality that Doctor Nevens declared: "True piety was treated with marked scorn. The idea of the new birth was an invention of cunning impostors. Prayer-meetings were held as an abomination." Doctor Kurtz, the historian, says of that period, "A revival was a new thing in that day," and "A converted minister was as great a phenomenon as a comet in the heavens."

Now, in the midst of such a low state of morals and religious ideals, Otterbein stood, in all the stateliness and

majesty of his colossal character, for the principle of personal holiness, and our Church has always stood for this element as the basis of all effective and enduring service.

Dr. A. T. Pierson tells how Mr. Haslam, who was about to start a new church enterprise, was cut to the heart by the question of an elderly Cornish woman who had studied the deep things of God. Said she, "Mr. Haslam, are ye going to build your spire from the top?" That set him to thinking, "I wonder if I have begun right; am I building from the bottom, or absurdly attempting to construct from the top down." Mr. Haslam at once changed his plans and began to lay the foundation of his enterprise in the character and lives of his membership. This is very suggestive. Otterbein held, and so we hold now, that the way to build up the kingdom of God is to begin at the bottom and at the center of all spiritual enterprise. The first step of advance in the work of God is the laying of right foundations in personal holiness. Character underlies conduct. Piety is vitally related to service. What a man is, in his interior life, finally determines what he does. Said Emerson, "What you are speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say." Of Jesus, John said, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." The personality of Jesus was back of all that he said and did.

This is the deeper secret of evangelism, missions, and all solid advance in the work of the kingdom. Underneath all planning, enterprises and gifts, there must be the Christlike type of holy living. The man that leads in any great moral movement or lays his hands upon any great enterprise of God, must, first of all, be transformed himself; then what he does will have the stamp and seal of fruitful and enduring service. Otterbein was a man of God. God's life and spirit were in him. He preached and illustrated personal holiness and integrity.

This is why he gave as his dying testimony, "The Lord has pleased to satisfy me that the work begun will abide."

Then, *our Church places special emphasis upon certain biblical doctrinal elements adapted to the needs of the present time.* Of course, we accept and teach the entire Word of God, as the rule of faith and conduct. We preach the whole gospel with its full doctrinal setting. But our Church has always been distinctively loyal to two great doctrinal truths which need tremendous emphasis in this day of laxity and latitudinarianism, namely, the doctrines of the *divine sonship of Jesus Christ,* and the *incarnation of the divine in the human.* This great truth of the deity of Jesus Christ shows that our Church's recognition of his divine sonship includes our faith in his infinite dignity, his supreme authority, his supernatural character, and his matchless power as the Savior of men.

Young men of our Church and generation, hold fast to the dignity of Jesus Christ as taught in the New Testament—the God-man, coequal and coeternal with the Father, God manifested in the flesh. Don't dishonor this supreme revelation of divine love. Don't degrade Christ and drag him down to the level of human thought and philosophy. Don't trifle with divine things. Preach Christ as the divine Savior, the great Savior, the all-sufficient Savior, who is able to save to the uttermost—the core and outermost of our being, and transform sinful men into the likeness of himself. We believe with St. Paul, that it requires supernatural power to reach such a glorious achievement as the remaking of men.

Then, we hold to the doctrine of the *divine life in man,* We emphasize this because it is the teaching of Jesus and St. Paul. They taught the miracle of regeneration, the fact of a spiritual resurrection, the inhabitation of Christ—Christ living in us and working through us, and

by the impulse of his love, driving us to hard tasks, heroic sacrifices, and glorious achievements.

We hold that the supreme need of the church and the world is this divine life in the human—life evolving, projecting, expressing itself; life, with all the earmarks of Christianity, impelling, aggressive, audacious, heroic, radiant, unselfish, sacrificing; life dominating the body with its tormenting passions and tendencies; life leading to heights of vision and feats of heroism; life eternal, because it came from God and finds its dwelling-place in the bosom of the Father. That is the type and quality of life which our Church stands for to-day. It has intensity, fervor, intelligence, radiance, joy, enthusiasm, and power.

True, in its outward expression, it is not always and everywhere at a high tide of fullness. It is sometimes wavering, fluctuating, lethargic, and chilly. Now and then the foam and froth of human enthusiasm discount it. However that may be, as a Church, we stand for the possibility and privilege of a rich, conscious, personal experience, in which the life of Christ fills the soul, grips the conscience, and impels to personal, joyous obedience. There is not a leader and reformer in all the churches to-day who does not believe that the supreme need of the church is the development and cultivation of such a positive, active, heroic spiritual life as shall make all the machinery of the church pulsate with dynamic power for the more certain and rapid conquest of this world.

Then, our Church stands for the principle of *representative democracy*. There are two extremes of church polity. The one is autocracy and the other is democracy. It is evident that the trend of the times is toward the latter. The closer the Church, as well as the State, keeps to the people, the stronger its hold and influence. Our Church stands between the extremes. We have

authority without despotism, democracy without anarchy, liberty without license, flexibility without confusion, administration without officialism. If any of these evils show themselves, we have provided an effective remedy for their correction and removal. We have a mild and sane form of superintendency and a workable system of connectionalism, which even non-itinerant churches feel the need of. Recently some of these churches have appointed commissions that are now looking to that end. The restrictive rules of our Church constitution protect inviolate three things in our organization, our superintendency, our itinerant plan, and the right of appeal. Then we have an appointive system with such flexibility that charges may be supplied and vacancies filled with reasonable deference to the will and wishes of the local church.

We also have a fair method of redress for wrongs and blunders, through a beautiful system of church courts. Any member, defending his rights, may take advantage of our ascending series of church tribunals, from the official board, through the quarterly conference, and the annual conference, to the General Conference, the highest judicatory of final adjustment. It is evident to those who have studied the nature and genius of our Church government, that to destroy any single tribunal, say the quarterly conference, would break a link in the chain of our series of church courts which would interfere with the rights of the humblest member of the local church. That would not be democratic. Our Church stands for the fullest protection of the humblest and weakest member in its communion.

What is the matter with the fundamental principles of our Church government? Absolutely nothing. Our fundamentals are workable and excellent. Certain changes and adjustments are always necessary in the machinery

of a growing church in a progressive age; but the supreme question for our Church now is, not so much the question of legislation as consecration; not so much law as life; not so much the letter as the spirit. As Doctor Peck once said, "Not more harness, but more horse to make the chariot go." Good stock, rich, red blood, health, spirit, energy, life, that is what is needed in this, our day and generation. Our Church has always fared well under intelligent, loyal, sane, vigorous, well-tempered leadership—men in all church departments and positions who know our Church and believe in it, and, believing in it, lead the rank and file of our people to get under great tasks and to take up the great forward movements of the kingdom.

Our Church, belated and slow in the past, now lays *special stress upon the value of higher education.* We have come to see the absolute necessity of an educated, trained ministry, and an intelligent laity. There never has been a time in the history of the church, when educational equipment was more essential than now. All credit and honor to the self-educated and self-made men of our Church! Let no one detract an iota from their valuable services and achievements. But, as a rule, the consecrated collegiate man reaches the greatest efficiency in Christian service. Leading church officials recognize this as true, both in the home and foreign fields. All things being equal, the trained man is the man of power and efficiency. Education gives power of leadership, mental capital, self-poise, and commanding influence. Then, our Church leaders have come to see the absolute need of the general education of our people concerning the forward movements of to-day. There is always needed a vigorous, persistent campaign of education, and a bureau of information, conducted in the interest of church life and efficiency.

The eye of Church leaders must be kept on the local church as the unit of the denomination. The pastor himself is the logical and pivotal person through whom these leaders must seek the development of the life of its members and their training into habits of giving and service. Without this training, we shall forever limp and lag and lament.

Our denominational name represents the *brotherhood idea.* A denominational name is of small value except for what it represents and stands for, and yet it is pardonable to express pride in our own name, "United Brethren in Christ." It stands for the spirit of Christian fellowship and a deep, essential, spiritual unity in Christ. Christianity means fellowship in Christ. The apostolic church was nearest a democracy, embodying the spirit of equality, charity, brotherhood, co-operation. We now stand ready to enter into all that that federated movement means and proposes in a closer co-operative union for the more rapid advancement of the kingdom of God in the earth. We cherish our name, not because it is better than others, but because it represents the richest, sweetest, divinest spirit of fellowship which Christ breathed into the heart of the church. No power can arrest the growing, insistent call for Christian unity. The brotherhood movement that is sweeping over the churches, in its conception, purpose, and possibilities is one of the greatest movements of this century. It is perfectly fitting that the men of our Church, already imbued with the spirit of Christian fellowship, should catch this brotherhood idea and impulse, and fall into the ranks of that great army of Christian soldiers on the march to larger and better things. Think of it! "The men of America for the Man of Galilee," in a union of effort for the great things of the kingdom!

It is said that on the night before the battle of Trafalgar, Lord Nelson called his two lieutenants, between

whom was a quarrel of long standing, to the deck of his flagship, and pointing to the enemy's fleet, which they must meet the next day, said to them, "To-morrow we must meet that enemy; shake hands for England's sake, shake hands and make up." We may thank God that this brotherhood idea dominates our churches. We have ceased quarreling over non-essentials and are joining our forces against the common foe. The light of a new morning has come. The dawn of a better day is upon us. The magnetic word of this new century is "fellowship." Co-operation and union of effort in Christ are the bugle notes of the times. Whatever division of God's army we belong to, we are to combine our forces for good. The world awaits the united, forward movement of the church of God, as one army, going forth under the banner of our common Lord, against our common foes, with a common faith and purpose to usher in speedily the larger and fuller triumphs of God's kingdom.

Our Church has hitched its chariot to the *great forward movements of the times.* Its leaders are awake to the problem of Christian giving. This is a perplexing problem in our church life, but we must solve it. Doctor Pierson well says that the "chariot wheels drag heavily until the divine idea of giving holds the throne and shrine in our conviction and sways our lives." We are now realizing the power of the ministry of money in the kingdom of God. But we shall never reach the largest results until we adopt divine principles and methods in raising money for God's cause. God's ownership, man's stewardship, systematic giving, the principle of tithing as a debt offering and privilege, are things to be taught and emphasized. We are making more of consecrated offerings, because of the need of God's own money for his own cause. We have come to see that when we train our young men to efficiency and power, they should receive

proper compensation with which to make use of that power and make their work count; when we plan for the enlargement of our educational work, those plans must be re-enforced with commensurate funds; when God sets before us the open door of the complex life of America, we must have responses sufficient to actualize our larger plans and broader patriotism; when we know the "open sore" of the world, the home church must be a modern Antioch, to send men and money to heal that "open sore."

Then, our Church is not a whit behind in the *spirit of evangelism.* It came into existence under the force of an evangelistic passion and impulse. It reached its crystallization in the baptism of a deep spiritual awakening. This christening communicated to our church consciousness a definite type of religious spirit and intensity. Normally the church is the center of intelligent religious fervor and fire. Otterbein was all aglow with missionary zeal. Our pioneer fathers were flaming evangelists, God-inspired, Spirit-filled, and self-appointed. They were driven forward by a divine inward impulse. They had no charge, no church, no salary, no official support. They preached in homes, in barns, in schoolhouses and groves. They were heroes of the cross, fired with evangelistic passion, whose faces were set westward towards a vast empire awaiting the inflowing tide of aggressive, expanding, American life.

Think of Bishop Newcomer, that heroic, itinerant evangelist, who made thirty-eight tours across the Alleghanies. What must have been his vision and sensation, as he knelt beside that stone slab on the summit of the mountain, imploring God's help and guidance on his trackless journey to the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Some one sat in the coach with Henry Clay, as he was crossing the summit of the Alleghanies, and seeing him drop his head in silent meditation said, "Mr. Clay, what

is the matter?" "Oh," said he, "I am just listening to the sound of the tread of the footsteps of the millions that shall yet populate the vast empire of the Mississippi Valley." Bishop Newcomer may have had some such vision of the future growth of the Church as that. However that may be, surely he did his share in his day to fulfill that vision. But have we not even a larger vision than that? Look to the North, with its marvelous growth and opportunities; and to the West with its broad, rich prairies, unfolding into a life of wealth and power; and to the Southland, with its prolific fields and new conditions; and to the Pacific slope, expanding into a magnificent civilization. America, with its vices and virtues, its perils and opportunities, its untoward environments and heterogeneous elements; America, with its throbbing, complex life, must be gospelized, evangelized, Christianized, and transformed by the power of the gospel in the interest of a strong, patriotic, dominant, Protestant Christianity. If we do not arise and possess the land, the heroism of our fathers will shame us, their sacrifices will mock us, and their spirit depart from us.

This Church awaits the official appointment of a commission on evangelism, so organized that it shall call into service our ablest preachers and most tactful leaders, who shall plan and save the men of this generation, and through them win America and the world to Christ.

Moreover, this evangelism is not limited by any natural or artificial boundary. The love of God overlaps all boundaries and flows out to the farthest limits of humanity. The bugle call comes from our workers beyond the sea for re-enforcement and help, and the inarticulate cry of the millions in midnight darkness travels all the way to the throne of Christ, and through him reaches the hearts of his own, who now walk in the light of God in the homeland. Our Church believes in worldwide evan-

gelism. May its heart be warmer and its vision broader. But the mind and spirit of our Church, its teachings, prayers and life have been crystallized into the deep-settled conviction that far above the material interests that now absorb our social, commercial, political, and national life, is the trumpet call of Christ to do the full will of God in this generation and to fulfill the prayer of our Lord, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

The *Church's attitude on moral reform* is commendable. The great twin foes of America have been slavery and rum. We have waged relentless warfare against both. Our fathers stood like a mountain of rock against the curse of human slavery until Abraham Lincoln smote it to death and broke the shackles from four million human beings. But we still have the accursed evil of rum, imposing upon men a far greater bondage than the former. We stand officially committed against that greatest of all curses, the American saloon. We hate it as the parent of vice and sorrow. We loathe it as the source of lawlessness and crime. We recognize the saloon to be a rendezvous for wrongdoers, a vampire, a breeder of anarchy, an outlaw, and an enemy with no rights that any decent person should respect. We are proud of our past official record and our present attitude concerning this gigantic, organized iniquity. We have spoken against this evil from the housetops. Our pulpits have hurled thunderbolts of wrath against it. Our Church organs have sounded out its coming death-knell. Our prayers and tears and sentiment have been crystallized into votes against it, and we are doing our share to usher in a period in which its days shall be numbered. President Lincoln said, on the day of his tragic death, that "the next snarl we have got to straighten out is the liquor question." He lived not to take up that contest. He fell a martyr to the

divine principle of human liberty; but his spirit of love for home and country and humanity did not perish with his taking; it fell like a baptism upon the hearts of others who espoused the cause of a greater emancipation from the slavery of rum and the dominion of the saloon. We did our best to assist in crushing out one form of slavery, and in doing so, we came into sharp issue with our brethren in the South. But, praise God, now we are all together in the front line of the battle against the liquor traffic and have joined hands with our friends from the Southland, who have started a temperance tidal wave that is sweeping with astonishing force over all the States and Territories of the Union. In the sixties we furnished our quota of brave men, who came out of city, village, hamlet, farmhouse, prairie cabin, and coal mine, and, under the blessing of God, the institution of American slavery was buried forever and that dark stain was cleansed from our flag. Now that same patriotic fire enkindles our hearts with love for humanity, expressing itself in songs of faith and ballots of lightning that have already made half the territory of the United States "dry" and free from the accursed abomination. And, God hearing our vow, we shall never cease fighting it until we shall have the reward of final victory, when that blighting, blistering, crushing, damning, accursed evil shall be smitten to the death and driven from our American civilization, and it shall be made forevermore impossible, either by sentiment or law, that the iniquitous American saloon shall exist and flourish under the starry folds of the American flag.

Surely our Church has good grounds for appealing to the heroic devotion and consecration of our young men in this day and generation.

In 1900, in Baltimore, Maryland, at our centennial jubilee service, the writer stood at the grave of the sainted

Otterbein and saw the granddaughter of Peter Kemp lay a bouquet of beautiful, fragrant flowers upon the marble slab beneath which lay the sacred dust of our founder. It was a beautiful and touching tribute to the memory and character of the great leader. But there was something in that tribute even deeper and more inspiring. It was typical and prophetic. There came then and there a vision of youth expressing its confidence in the great work Otterbein wrought; youth facing the dawn of a new day, with its ripening harvest and opening doors of opportunity; youth laying upon the radiant brow of its deserving parent the flower of a covenant promise, to make the morrow of our Church brighter and better, in the interest of personal righteousness and spiritual Christianity.

Ashamed of our Church? No! Proud of her? Yes! Grateful for her ministry? Yes! A thousand times, yes!

Think of her providential origin, her splendid history, her heroic sacrifices, her triumphant achievements, her spiritual tone, her evangelistic passion, her intelligent life, and her assuring future, never brighter than to-day. Think of her broadened vision and enlarged plans for carrying the banner of the cross into the ripening fields of the homeland and into the faraway, whitening harvest beyond the sea, and know that her virtues, genius, plannings, needs, and golden outlook make one mute, eloquent, mighty appeal for the devotion and heroism of her noble sons and daughters in this bright day of God.

THE PERFUME OF A CHURCH MORTGAGE.

A church mortgage. What is it? A spook? Hobgoblin? Ghost? Myth? No, it is an embarrassing reality. It is not a thing of beauty. It has horns, claws, and teeth. It has no admirers. The very sight of it awakens prejudice and arouses opposition. The name has no symphonic sound. It is pitched to a minor key and gives forth a discordant note. Its voice is like the sound of a hungry wolf. It is as dangerous as a gnawing canker. It is even worse than a scolding wife, or a smoking chimney, or a religious tramp, or a dying church. It has no beauty that we should love it, nor merit that we should admire it.

But, really, has a church mortgage no commendable features? Let not our prejudice blind our eyes. It has some good features.

First, it shows the kindly disposition of the mortgagor, who befriends the needy and struggling. Its purpose is to help and not to hinder, to relieve and not to crush, to bless and not to curse.

Second, it makes possible the beginning of certain church enterprises. Such a re-enforcement has started many mission churches. It is like a father who helps his son to start in business, or tides him over the struggles of the pioneer period.

Third, it also challenges the ambition and honor of those who give it. No live church can rest easy as long as the mortgage hangs over its head, or around its neck as a millstone. It is a challenging appeal to every member of the society to meet his sacred obligation.

A church mortgage also has its perils. It may cause distraction, depress leaders, dishearten the membership, cause the pastor to worry, and his wife's heart to ache

with crushing anxiety. It often stands in the way of progress, aggression, and expansion. It saps the life and energy of the church, when that energy should be directed to the achievement of higher spiritual ends. It chokes the channel of church life and activity. It exhausts its resources in the maintenance of its life, when they should be used for edification and expansion. Evidently a long-standing mortgage is a curse instead of a blessing to a church.

But what of its perfume? Can we imagine any? The perfume appears in the burning. It rises as an incense. Do you inhale the sweet-smelling savor that fills the room? Its death is a blessing, for, like one of old, it saves more in its death than in its life.

We are tempted to apostrophize you, O Church Mortgage! You have no popularity; you have no friends in most churches. You are not liked; you are hated. Nothing will satisfy but your speedy destruction. You are to be committed to the flames. Willing hands will apply to you the deadly match, touched with brimstone, indicative of the place and character of your doom. You will not have the rites of a Christian burial. You will be cremated and your ashes deposited in an urn, and over you will be chanted the final words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." And may there never be a resurrection!

Even your very smoke is offensive, for it is the smoke of torment, from which prayers have been offered for speedy deliverance—deliverance from tormenting fears and threatening officials.

But your cremation may be a blessing to the church, a fragrant odor that fills the room, the perfume of a glorious victory. Your destruction means emancipation from the bondage of an embarrassing debt, the lifting of a millstone from the galled neck of the church, so that it may present the oblation of a higher service and a

larger ministry to humankind in the freedom which God has planned for the church that represents him.

O Mortgage, thy work is over and our troubles are ended. Our children and our children's children to succeeding generations will shout over thy vanquishment and timely end. We bid thee one long farewell. Thou art going the way of all the earth. Thou art as the withering flower, the dissolving cloud, the evanescent morning dew. Thou art "as a tale that is told," held only in the vise of memory. No Christmas bells will ring for thee; no New Year's voice will call thy name. No loving hands will embalm thy form, or break the alabaster box of ointment over thy head.

It is foreordained, with an unalterable decree, that thou shalt die. Thy days are now over. Thy moments are numbered. Thy end is at hand. We consign thee a place befitting thee, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest."

Peace be to thy ashes! Blessings upon blessings to thy conquerors! A new face is waiting to take thy place, a face radiant with faith, hope, and love; a face lighted with optimism and expectancy for larger things and greater achievements for the church and the kingdom of God. The old day passes away into the dawning of a new day, and the exchange of the old for the new is glorious. We chant the passing of the old and the dawning of the new, with the immortal Tennyson:

"His face is growing sharp and thin,
Close up his eyes; tie up his chin.
Step from the corpse and let him in
That standeth there alone;
And waiteth at the door.

There's a new foot on the floor,
My friend,
And a new face at the door,
My friend."

"A new face at the door"—the face of a happy pastor, clothed with full liberty to make his untrammeled church a rich contribution and blessing to the entire community. Then this happy, grateful pastor will, evermore, present the message for Church Erection. He will enthusiastically commend it for its help in re-enforcing young societies in their efforts to erect comfortable houses of worship, in which the gospel is preached and souls are impressed and saved. He will show the vital relation between the Church Erection and the Home Mission societies, which join hands in planting missions in needy places, and through a substantial house of worship, help young churches to permanency and splendid standing and influence. He will praise God for those benefactors and beneficent agencies which build up the church and promote God's kingdom.

The burning of a church mortgage, with its joyous triumph, deserves to be succeeded with such a grateful expression of appreciation of the help of the Church Erection Society as shall fill its treasury with funds that it may continue to assist in extending the kingdom and thus multiply its power and influence manyfold.

MOTHER, THE RICHEST LEGACY.

"Mother" is the sweetest word ever spoken. Its cadence is rich and musical. It is full of rhythm and pathos. How delightful to hear a little child, with almost divine innocence and beauty, utter the word "mother"! It is the synonym of love. It stands associated with the richest relations and sweetest fellowships of earth. Love encompasses that word and makes it the tenderest word this side of heaven. It stands connected with the sacredness of the marriage vow and home life, fundamental elements in Christian society and high civilization. The greatest glory of a nation is pure, elevated, intelligent motherhood.

The Bible stories of mothers are full of significance and inspiration. How beautiful the consecration of Hannah, who gave her son to God before his birth! If more mothers of to-day had such exalted conceptions of the Christian ministry that they would delight in having their sons called of God to the highest vocation in the universe, the vacant ranks would be filled with Christian workers to extend the kingdom of God among men.

Elisabeth, the mother of the Baptist, whose position was next to Jesus, showed her greatness in her willingness that her son should take the second place in the kingdom, his fame vanishing in the rising glory of the Greater One.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, crowned motherhood in all ages with the grace and beauty of humility, and pious acquiescence to the will of God. With immortal beauty Jesus on the cross cannonized motherhood by showing thoughtful love and care for his mother. The words, "Behold thy mother!" have come down through the centuries in living letters that time cannot efface.

With what marvelous persistency of love the Canaanite mother plead with Jesus for her afflicted daughter.

How many thousands cry unto God for their daughters who need the saving and comforting grace of Jesus Christ to keep them in wholesome and upright living.

Who does not admire the ambitious mother of the sons of Zebedee, who sought their elevation in the kingdom of God? Her desire was natural and commendable. One admires a mother who has high ideals for her children, and desires the very best for them in human life. It would be unnatural and unworthy for them to be satisfied with anything less than that. It is interesting to study the faces of mothers on commencement occasions, after they have toiled and sacrificed to help their children to the hour and honor of graduation. What delight fills their heart and what joy inundates their soul as they see their children carry away the parchment that represents years of hard study in preparation for life's work! The greatest reward of a mother is the success and honor achieved by her children in the struggle of life. The mother of the distinguished Wright sons had a superior intellect. She possessed fine mathematical talent. Who knows how much those famous inventors owe to their sainted mother.

The widow in the temple, whom Jesus commended for her generosity, may have been a mother. If so, she was one of the many mothers, who, in their widowhood, are heroic in giving for God's cause. Jesus said she gave more than all the rest, for she gave her living. As Jesus looked upon the scene, he knew that the "rich donors had given out of their superfluity, while she had given out of her deficiency." Her gift was a real sacrifice. There still are Christian widows, poor washerwomen in the church, whose generous offerings are proportionately far beyond those who give of their opulence.

Men are truer and better if they always keep in mind the superlative value of motherhood. The mother is the

real home-maker. What is home without a mother's presence, attention, love, and thoughtful care? However palatial and beautifully furnished the residence may be, it loses its highest attraction without the love and fellowship of mother.

Thoughts go back to the old homestead with tenderest memory. It was homely but clean and well kept. The old room, once hallowed by the family altar and the soft voice of prayer, is still a sacred place. There is the old, worn Bible which mother used to read. I delight to read out of it again, and to kiss the place where she used to kneel and ask God's blessing upon her children, calling them by name, then closing with a familiar hymn, maybe in German, "Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love."

What a thrill of joy comes as I recall those early scenes, and seem to hear again the voice of my angel mother in prayer or song or loving counsel! Blessed be God for the influence and example of a pious, Christian mother! Her words were few, but her heart was full of thoughts which she sent up to God in prayer, and which descended as messengers of blessing upon her household. This may be only sentiment, but sentiment like that is practical. Its expression does good. It is a tonic to the soul. In the stress and strain of life the memory of mother and of the old home holds us like a cable of steel to mother's God.

President Garfield, at his inauguration, imprinted a kiss upon the cheek of his aged mother in recognition of the powerful influence upon his character and life. President McKinley, on hearing of the illness of his mother, rushed across the continent to her bedside and ministered to her in her dying hour. Henry W. Grady, at the meridian of his fame and eloquence, felt that he was losing something of the innocence and simplicity of childhood.

He went back to the home of his mother in Georgia, and asked his mother to treat him as she used to when he was a little child, saying his childish prayers, encompassed with her arms of love, so that he might retain the simplicity and innocence of childhood days, and be safeguarded against the perils and temptations of public life. That great orator honored his mother and himself in that act.

William Jennings Bryan has spoken beautifully of "The Mother and Her Child": "Why is the mother's love for her child the strongest, tenderest, and sweetest relationship in the world? The Bible explains it. 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' The mother has invested in her child as the father does not, and cannot. Her life trembles in the balance at the baby's birth; she enfolds the infant in her care; she expends upon her child her nervous force and energy; she endows it with the wealth of her love; she dreams of what it is to be and do. And, oh, if the mother's dreams came true, what a different world this would be! The most pathetic struggle in all the world is not the struggle upon the battlefield, between men inured to hardship. It is the struggle of the mother to save her boy when men set traps for him, lay snares for him, and seek to make money by ruining him. It isn't fair; you know it is not fair to give the ballot to those who conspire to rob the home of all that is precious and tie the mother's hands when she is trying to save her child. If there is such a thing as justice, surely a mother has a right to a voice in shaping the environments that shall determine whether her son will realize her hopes or bring her gray hairs in sorrow to the grave."

Home is the chief corner stone of society, and mother is the very center of its sweetness and beauty. What a debt we owe to our mothers! Their influence is measureless. They gave us life. They impressed upon us

their personality. Their prayers, loves, sacrifices, ministries are more valuable than gold and silver.

We ought to care with great thoughtfulness and tenderness for our living mothers. Send them letters of remembrance. Present them flowers as tokens of filial love. Tell them over and over again a thousand times that we love them with a constancy that nothing can chill or becloud. In the solitude and temptations of their old age, go to them like a little child with a "God bless you," and with expressions of grateful affection. Follow them down into the evening of life with careful attention.

The world loves to crown motherhood because she makes home the sweetest place on earth, the very foretaste of heaven. Men cross continents and seas to visit the grave that contains the sacred dust of mother. We are purer and better and nobler as memories of mother crowd upon us and baptize our souls with a baptism of grateful affection.

Here is a beautiful tribute to "Mother" which I quote:

"Bowed, now, with the cares of many years, wrinkled with the anxiety she has known, the streaks of gray have crept into her hair so silently we hardly know when they began their creeping. The cheek is paler than it was in earlier days, the step is less elastic. The youthful beauty that was hers is shadowed by a beauty all the sweeter. The voice is quavery a little, worn thin from many admonitions given to us all. The long vigils of the night she kept! The anxious moments that she spent! The sacrifices she made for us! The patient care with which she watched her own, the wisdom that was shown in her protection, the hopes she had for all of us—these things have left their little trails across her face, like blossoms of time, full-grown upon maturity.

"Oft in the darkness of the night she crept into the room, and stood beside the bed or tucked the coverlet

about the feet of the slumbering child. With soothing hand she felt the fevered brow, and watched with throbbing heart the coming of the morning. Softly she stepped across the floor lest she disturb the sleeper, but always she was at her place when she was needed. No hand but hers could give such touch of comfort. The first to greet you in the morning; the last to bid you peace and pleasant slumbers. The easiest of all the household to awaken; the quickest to reach your bedside at the call of distress. You depended upon her more than upon all the world beside. Neglected when things went well with you, she was the first remembered when your troubles came. God grant that life may end for us and all of us, the moment that her memory is no longer sacred. For, here on earth, without the blessed visions of the earlier days and mother, without the fondest recollections of her sacrifices for us, without the love which we should bear for her—darkness and despair should be our lot."

Mother! Mother's Bible! Mother's prayers! Mother's love! Mother's patience! Mother's constancy! Mother's kiss of forgiveness! Mother's hand of benediction and blessing! Blessed words.

Let us take up her old Bible and read it with the lessons that are accentuated by years of blessed memory. Let us go to her, if she is still living, and crown her with gifts of love and expressions that sweeten her lonely life. If she has departed to the better land, strew her grave with evergreen and fragrant flowers, and continue to honor her memory with lives of purity, nobility, and beneficent service. Let us make Mothers' Day here on earth one that we shall commemorate with delight when we meet her some sweet day on high!

Christ clearly taught that evangelism is the supreme business of the church. His ministry illustrated this truth. The scribes and Pharisees criticized him for receiving sinners and showing concern for those outside certain special classes. Their murmuring drew from Jesus the remarkable statement, "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." He added the three sparkling parables in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son. These parables set forth the spirit and mission of Jesus Christ. There is danger of the church missing the note of true evangelism in these times of "New Thought," social pleasure, and commercial excitement. The fundamental is liable to be superceded by the superficial; the eternal, by the temporal; the spiritual, by the material. Those three parables give the best definition of evangelism.

Evangelism *is the love of God seeking after lost men.* Men have tried to wrest this truth from the teaching of Christ, but it remains the same throughout the Christian centuries. Apart from Christ, sinners are lost and need recovery. Christ is their only hope of recovery. He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man can come to God except Christ bring him. No one need despair, if he let Christ bring him to the Father. This is the message of hope that divine love bears to all men.

Evangelism manifests itself in a *burning passion for man.* It is Jesus weeping over lost Jerusalem and a doomed nation that rejected him. It is Paul's heart aching that he might save some. It is John Knox praying for Scotland, in the passion of a Gethsemane. It is Paton giving his life for cannibals, and Livingstone dying for Africa. It is our missionaries imperiling and sacrificing their precious lives for lost, famishing, dying men and

women in every corner of the earth. It is the seeking love of Christ reproduced in others in passionate concern to win them to God. It is this Christ-passion continued in his disciples that perpetuates the church as an evangelistic agency for the promotion of God's kingdom among men.

Evangelism means the *aggression of love after lost men.* Love will not allow the sinner to go on to ruin, unnoticed and uncared for. It follows after the wayward. It hunts up the lost. It stands and pleads for admittance and welcome. It leaves the ninety and nine and seeks the perishing one. It is like the love of a mother, who, while her other boys are safe in the fold, cannot be content if one of her boys is a prodigal. Nothing will satisfy love but the recovery and restored happiness of those in peril. Isaiah peered through the coming centuries and had a vision of the coming Christ in the day of his redemption and of the final fruitage of his redemptive love. He shows that nothing will satisfy the love of Christ but the redemption of mankind. Then he shouts in rapturous song, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

The church must have the same spirit of aggression for lost men, if she would represent the passion of Christ. She must be aggressive, missionary, evangelistic, ever pressing the message of salvation to the ears of the unsaved. The ministry of the church should be one long search for lost men, and continuous effort to bring them home to the fold of God. The church that loses its passion for men and rests in its own self-sufficiency and boasted strength, has lost the true spirit of Christ, and is a poor, pitiable representative of Jesus, who conspicuously exhibited the infinite yearning of redemptive love.

Evangelism *reaches its climax in the persistency of love.* Beautifully wonderful is the expression, "Until he

find it." What persistency! What constancy! What longing upon the part of the Good Shepherd! He leaves the ninety and nine and goes after the lost, crossing streams, climbing mountains, walking through thorns and briers and over rough places into the darkness of the night, with blistered feet and torn bleeding hands, *until he find it.* How that shames our indifference and chides us for our coldness of heart, as we think of the thousands of persons who are caught in the thorns and briers of the world, and are being devoured by the demons of greed, drink, physical abuse, and social evils too gross and repugnant to mention! How we should magnify the amazing love of Christ in his followers that leads them to bury themselves in the darkness of the city, or the loneliness of the sparsely-settled territory, or in lands where the name of Christ is unknown, and spend their time and energy in patiently telling the story of divine love! What ought to thrill the whole church, every minister and Christian worker, is not only the boundless, amazing love of God in Christ for a lost world, but the persistency of that love. Oh, it is wonderful! No declension, no interruption, no cold, perfunctory, patronizing service, but warm, intense, yearning, persistent love for lost men! There can be no more expressive word than this simple statement, "Until he find it."

"There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold;
But one was on the hills far away,
Far off from the gates of gold:
Away on the mountain, wild and bare,
Far off from the tender Shepherd's care.
But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed,
Nor how dark was the night the Lord passed through
Ere he found his sheep that was lost!"

May God keep ever before the church this picture of the Good Shepherd's persistent, seeking love for the lost sheep. Help us to see the long search, the weary march, the sleepless nights, the contention with devouring wolves, and the mangled sheep laid on his shoulders, and his heart bounding with joy as he bore it safely back to the sheepfold, amid the rejoicing of his friends. Notice that little touch, "His friends rejoice with him." Even so the evangelistic church is happy over those who are converted at her altars, and is always at her best when she is winning souls to Christ.

Evangelism *brings blessed results.* It warms and quickens the heart of the church. Many members grow cold and indifferent to the spiritual power of the church. They live on a low plane of self-gratification and worldly pleasures. They are at ease in Zion. They have apathy towards the aggressive interests of the kingdom. Many have not the spirit of sacrifice for the causes that call for the larger and heroic things of God. The fires of evangelism burn too low. Pentecostal preaching is too rarely heard. A rich, radiant, triumphant Christian experience is too rarely felt, at least not expressed by lip or life. An intense evangelism will kindle the fire on church altars that will manifest itself in beautiful fellowship and splendid achievements.

It will also add to the growth of the church. How can the church extend her dominion into the territory of the world except by encroachment upon it. Christianity is a religion of conquest. Christians must go out after their unsaved and unchurched neighbors and friends in order to increase the strength of the church. Jesus commanded his disciples to go out and bring them in. The church is a great field in all its departments for extensive and intensive growth. The spirit of evangelism should encompass the Sunday school and Young People's soci-

ety. The revival current should be turned into those departments of the church from which contributions should be made to the membership as normally and expectantly as the harvest comes from seed-sowing.

A high tide of evangelism will inspire again the old pentecostal power and passion of preaching. A revived and revival church will bring a crop of preachers that will present the old message with old-time impressiveness. They will not be shy of doctrinal preaching. They will present fundamentals, essentials, and eternals, as Jesus presented them. They will have the courage and loyalty to preach revealed truth, illuminative and searching, with the tenderest love. A baptism of love for humanity and a melting tenderness for men that need salvation, help, and comfort in Christ, will accompany a deep current of evangelistic passion and concern for the sinful, needy, bruised, and disheartened ones about us.

Why should there be any change in emphasizing fundamentals in the preaching and teaching of the Word? Edwards, Finney, Whitefield, Chalmers, Moody, and others preached truth that stirred and fired the heart of the church. Their preaching was attended with revivalistic power. Thousands were converted at the church altars, many of whom became active, efficient Christians and ministers of the gospel. God pity the ministers and churches that depreciate revivals and the spirit of evangelism. Heaven is opening its windows to those who believe in personal and organized evangelism, and is enriching the life of the churches in such a way as to inspire loyalty to Christ, generosity in giving, and sacrifice in service. Watch those churches and their pastors and see how their prayer-rooms are filled, their treasuries are replenished to overflowing, and their spiritual influence and winning power are increasing in ever-widening circles.

Jesus, the Son of God, made the infinite descent to earth to rescue a lost world. He died to save from sin and misery that lost man farthest away from God and farthest down in the depths of degradation. We must have the same passion for souls. Says Dr. C. L. Goodell, in words that burn, "The only love which never halts and never fails, is the love of God for a lost world." We are to interpret that to the sin-cursed and the desolate. Concerning the evangel, there is only one verdict in earth, or hell, or heaven, and this is the verdict, "He that winneth souls is wise."

Let every Christian write in his Bible, bind about his neck, fix in his memory, the other sweet promise concerning evangelism, "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, forever and ever."

THE POWER OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Paul's Easter aspiration is expressed in the words, "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection." Paul rejoiced in the fact of Christ's physical resurrection. He had no doubt of this great historical event. He spoke of it with unanswerable argument and conviction. In that wonderful resurrection chapter, he threw up a great mountain truth, which stands as abiding as the everlasting hills of God. This great truth has come down through the Christian centuries with remarkable persistency and is so incontestable that we need spend no time in defense of it.

Paul knew that certain facts concerning Christ's physical resurrection were beyond doubt. The sealed sepulcher was actually broken. Jesus vacated the tomb by his own rising. Reliable witnesses established his identity after his resurrection. Two witnesses from heaven proclaimed him as the Risen One. He was recognized by the women who knew him before this event. He appeared unto Simon. Five hundred persons met him by appointment on the Galilean mountain. Thomas probed the wounds made at his crucifixion. And Paul himself beheld him at the gate of Damascus years later.

Paul not only saw the risen Christ, but talked with him, and received his commission direct from his hand. He went forth everywhere preaching this doctrine to his dying hour. Neither persecution nor affliction caused him to recede an iota from this truth. In bonds and punishment, in cold and hunger, in poverty and scorn, he held to this fact with heroic fidelity. He died with this precious truth on his lips. Christendom believes in Christianity, because Christ died for it. And Paul's testimony is unimpeachable because he sealed it with martyrdom.

Impostors do not die for a falsehood. We spurn the idea of false testimony in our courts. We know that Christendom could not have come from an unbroken grave. Nothing can explain the empty tomb of Christ but the fact that in the exercise of his own omnipotence, he rose triumphant as the Prince of Life.

The Christian church is the product and miracle of the Risen One. It is unreasonable to conclude that it could have made such marvelous progress during the Christian centuries, without the inspiration and power that come from the presence and comradeship of the risen, reigning Christ. The sweetness and fragrance of the name of Jesus grows out of the fact that Christ died for our sins and rose for our complete, final redemption.

But Paul was not content with confidence in the simple fact of the resurrection. His desire was to go beyond the intellectual apprehension of this truth, to a personal, experimental knowledge of its power in his own character and life.

The possibilities wrapped up in an acorn can never be tested if it lie untouched by the soil, moisture, and sunshine. Let it have the touch of soil, rain, and sunshine, and out of it will come forth a mighty tree which will perpetuate itself for centuries and multiply itself into a mighty forest. So with a great truth. It may lie outside of ourselves and accomplish but little through a lifetime, but let that same power take root and dominate a human life, and its power of development and service cannot be fully measured. The highest and deepest joy of every Easter festival will be the experimental knowledge of the power of Christ's spiritual resurrection in the soul.

We should not linger hopelessly about the empty tomb. "He is not dead: he is risen." Why seek the living among the dead? Let us seek his living presence. Let us find him as a Savior and friend. Let us learn

to know him as a present force, inspiration, and joy in our daily lives. It is the uplifting, transfiguring power of his presence that makes the Eastertide rich with blessings. The eyes of all Christendom, at Easter, are turned toward the empty tomb of Christ. This is helpful, but let all eyes be fixed upon the risen, living, reigning Prince, from whom cometh all help.

Such knowledge gives the assurance of personal immortality. God has set eternity in the heart; its fires burn on the altar of the soul. The light of hope which God has kindled in the human breast has never been extinguished. These quenchless longings and aspirations are the foregleams of an endless life. But who can be satisfied with an immortality that is vague, indefinite, and far away? Christ showed his thoughtful love by bringing a clear and positive revelation of this truth. He brought life and immortality to light. He makes clear what was vague. He makes sure what was uncertain. He brought close to our hearts that which was far away.

Jesus opened the gates of the tomb and stood on the eternal side, carrying his humanity with him. His intimate touch with our humanity makes him a real Savior. It puts enthusiasm into the race. It gives us power to fight successfully the battles of life. We belong to the immortal hosts. Our friends that have fallen asleep in Christ cannot be held in the tomb. The bondage of the grave has been broken. The sting of death has been destroyed. The law of decline and decay has been overcome. The great Conqueror has risen in us and we, too, shall rise in him and finally share his triumph. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye appear with him in glory." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us unto a living hope by the resur-

rection of Jesus from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away."

This assurance of personal immortality gives great gladness to Easter day. It shows what a triumphant thing is Christianity. It stands in striking contrast with infidelity. Infidelity has no rising sun, no coming day, no returning springtime, no better to-morrow. It sounds a dirge, confesses defeat, and casts a shadow over all human life and human relations. It leads to an eternal midnight of gloom and despair. But Christianity is not so. It is full of optimism. It spans the earth with the bow of promise. It decks the sky with the star of hope. It sounds the note of triumph in the day of battle, and sings its sweetest song in the night of trouble. Like a songbird, it mounts upon the wings of faith in the Risen Christ and soars into his presence and hears his assuring voice, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Then, there is power in Christ's resurrection to build up in us a new humanity. Personal immortality means more than mere continuousness of life. That may be preferable to annihilation. But why open to us prospects which we cannot reach? Why bring us into associations we cannot enjoy? Why introduce us into a new world for which we are not fitted? If we should continue forever carrying our infirmities, coarseness, narrowness, and blunders that fill us with shame and regret, endless life would not be a blessing in itself. We need something more than that. We need moral revolution, spiritual uplift, a new manhood, built upon the experimental knowledge of the risen Christ. Paul says we need the Christ-life and energy imparted to us, in order to build up a new humanity, to give us a new start, a new life, new conceptions, new ideals, new loves, new joys, new incentives.

Naturally, we live on a too low plane. We are scarcely fit to live in this world, much less in another.

Paul would have men lifted up to a high plane of life; he would have us walk in the strength of a new and redeemed humanity.

Then Paul congratulates us that we have two homes. Our citizenship is in heaven while we live here on earth. Death is a transference from this home to the heavenly one awaiting us. God has given us this beautiful world with its exhaustless treasures, its golden opportunities and delightful fellowships. We love its music, its flowers, its friendships, its growing life, its sacred memories and scenes of early childhood. How sweet the memory of that humble home, where father and mother toiled and struggled, and where we found our life into which flowed the strength of a father's example and the tenderness of a mother's love! Loss, burden, anxiety, separation, and bereavement were scarcely thought of then. But now the old homestead exists only as a picture before our tear-dimmed eyes. Now and then we go back and tread softly on that ground made sacred by a thousand sweet memories, and our hearts are made young again, as we think of the days we played in childhood joy.

But strangers have come and built possessions there, while those we knew and loved have gone to their home on high. They still live in our memory, and our love has followed them to the heavenly city, of which we are citizens. Heaven becomes a delightful society, whose self-identity and self-consciousness give it charm and attractiveness. St. John gives a vision of the holy city, where weeping shall be no more; of the river of life that flows for all nations; of trees whose foliage shall never wither; of the Easter alleluias that rise from the lips of the redeemed; of our mediatorial King, crowned with the diadem of resurrection glory. But besides the golden streets, pearly gates, and jeweled walls, those we knew here are

transfigured into moral beauty, purer, nobler, and happier than they ever appeared on earth.

Then the resurrection brightens and gladdens this earth, by making all our friendships in Christ abiding and eternal. This is our Easter joy and inspiration on the earthside of the tomb. Jesus comes closer to us as a friend and brother. He puts his throbbing heart of love and sympathy against our drooping humanity and touches it into responsive love. Evidently Jesus won the hearts of the men and women who came to the sepulcher with their tributes of grateful affection. Coming while it was yet dark was an evidence of their love. The spices showed the tenderness of their affection. The tendrils of their hearts were so entwined about Jesus that he carried their love with him down into the tomb and out of it again. Love is a wonderful passion. It is undying. The grave cannot shut out or quench it. Their friendship to Jesus and his friendship to them were as true and real after his rising as before. They were even dearer. The resurrection proved Jesus to be our eternal brother and friend. And so it has made all friendships in him indissoluble and abiding.

We lose nothing by death. We gain immeasurably through it. Our dearest friends go down into the grave and then come up out of it larger, richer, nobler, purer, and happier. This makes the Christian religion the brightest and sweetest treasure in the world. It transfigures this life and makes it the very vestibule of heaven. It spans the earth with the bow of promise, and baptizes our fellowships and relations with a hope that makes this life worth living, and gives us courage and strength to bear our sorrows and burdens with Christian fortitude and patience.

Easter is a time of triumph, hope, and cheer. Amid Easter lilies, emblems of purity and immortality, alle-

luias of praise and thanksgiving, friendships that reach down from heaven to earth, let us thank God that our life shall not be the pathos of a sad ending, the shadow of an eternal night, but the evolution of better things ahead, the beginning of a glorious consummation, the dawn of a new day in which our loves shall never die, our friendships shall never be sundered, our treasures never perish, our joys never diminished, our reunions never broken, and our hope, instead of being destroyed by death, shall find fruition in that completed life that lies just beyond us.

The incarnation and resurrection of Christ are the two great miracles that attest the power of Christianity to project and perpetuate itself forever. Pinning our faith to these two incontestable miracles, we rest in the infinite power of the risen Christ, and are buoyed with the living hope set before us, which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. We belong to the immortal hosts of the redeemed, whose number is ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing; and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

HEAVEN.

Life is a pilgrimage. It has direction, tendency, goal. To the Christian, heaven is that goal. The people of God in Old Testament times laid hold of the promises of God "afar off"; they counted themselves strangers and pilgrims marching to their eternal home.

Everything on earth suggests that this is a passage world, and not a permanent dwelling place. Nothing earthly can satisfy the immortal soul. When earth has done her best, man still feels his homelessness, and looks and longs for a better country.

Life's changes and vicissitudes accentuate this fact. Faith looks up and away to the homeland of the soul. Those who say they are strangers declare that they seek a country which they call their own. Abraham understood the difference between the temporal and eternal part of God's promise of a better land. He built no city and claimed no abiding place in Canaan, but looked for a city which God had prepared for him in the skies.

Every Christian is a pilgrim. We live in tents. We are on the march to the true fatherland. "Here we have no continuing city, but seek one to come."

Death is but an incident in our pilgrimage. It affects no change of character. It simply puts a period to human probation, and opens the door through which the traveler passes into another world. This is in perfect accord with the highest dictates of reason. For who can believe that this brief life of incompleteness and vicissitude is the final realization of God's plans and purposes? Who can think that God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, would create the human mind, with its quenchless longings and aspirations, and then doom it to final disappointment and ruin? No such God as that could reasonably

lay claim to human affection and homage. Religion harmonizes with the highest rationality. It revolts at the *ipse dixit* of a mere dogma, and rebels against the folly of an irrational statement. Faith and reason both inquire anxiously: "Is there no haven for the storm beaten vessel? Is there no reward for the heroic warrior? Is there no crown for the faithful? Is there no inheritance for the children of God? Is there no final homing-place for the weary, dust-covered pilgrim? After 'life's fitful fever is o'er,' must we lie down along life's dusty pathway and remain there forever? Is death an eternal sleep, with no waking time? Are the words of Jesus without veracity and sincerity? Is his teaching but a sham, a mocking deception?" No; a thousand voices cry out, No. His word is not a cunningly-devised fable. His promises are "Yea and amen," they are true and unchanging, abiding as the everlasting hills of God. We may thank God that there is another existence with which this life is vitally connected, and which invests it with sacredness and responsibility.

A glorious thing is the Christian religion. It awakens no false hopes. It makes no promises that it cannot and does not fulfill. It fills the future with radiance. It solaces the lonely, aching heart, and buoys the drooping, crushed soul. It points to a better and glorious tomorrow. It puts melody in the soul of every Christian pilgrim and songs of hope on his lips, even in the night of trial and sorrow. It is a light that shines like the sun in the heavens, and pours into the dark tomb the radiance of eternal day. It whispers to the mourner the sweetest words that ever fell on human ears, "I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

The realization that we are all on the march to our eternal home, not only should inspire us with bright hope and cheer, but should also give us a sense of grave responsibility. It should not depress us and make us sad, but spur us to increased diligence and heroic service in the tasks and battles of life. Our fathers, where are they? Our dearest friends have gone into the great beyond, and thither we are hastening.

What is our attitude and expectancy? Are we pilgrims, holding loosely to the things of earth? Are we steadily building up the great superstructure of character, which shall abide forever in the temple of God? Is our life hid with Christ in God, so that our affections are set on things that are spiritual and eternal?

Earth is not to be despised. This life, glorious as it is, is not to be depreciated. We should make the most of it, and put the best we have in it. We owe it to our highest conceptions of manhood and womanhood to seek to make the richest contributions to our earthly home, the Church, the State, the wider world, and civilization in the varied ministries of consecrated and sacrificial service.

The comparison between this country and the heavenly is not invidious. It is the same as saying that this is a beautiful world, and we ought to make it sweeter and happier and better each day of our lives, but there are better things ahead in waiting. This life, at its best, is but the vestibule to the mansion, the dawn of the morning to the full day, childhood to the perfect man.

Heaven is infinitely superior to the best of earth. The Bible exhausts itself in the use of metaphors to paint the beauty of the celestial city. Paul confesses the poverty of human language to give an adequate description of the splendor and glory of the heavenly country. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither has it entered into the

heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for those that love him."

Our knowledge of heaven is very meager, and yet the inspired Bible writers give an enravishing glimpse of heaven. Its magnificence is beyond conception. No one can conceive fully the surpassing beauty of that country, with its exhaustless resources, its objects of infinite variety, the boundless expanse of territory, all life free from blight and decay. What of its streets of gold, gates of pearl, walls of jasper, crystal river, perennial fruitage, and charming landscapes! If the divine hand can paint the objects of nature here on earth, and give them the beauty of perfection, exquisite in color and design, what could he not do to make heaven a place of surpassing magnificence!

Its opportunities are unsurpassed. In this world the environments of life are often unfavorable. Many powerful influences are inimical. Sometimes they are more against us than for us, and hinder the soul from moving heavenward and Godward. In this hard battle God will give sufficient grace and help to triumph over our environments, and achieve victory over every opposing force and influence, but in heaven there will be no climatic changes, no poisonous winds to blight, no biting frosts to destory. In that heavenly atmosphere the soul will be unhindered in its march to its highest attainment. From the infinite heights of life, it will move on forever in its eternal development and progression.

The felicitous condition of the inhabitants of that heavenly country is beyond the reach of our highest thought and imagination. There will be complete immunity from all trial and suffering. The painful processes of God's chastisements, the pangs of grief that pierce the heart, the distress of physical disease, the bitings of quickened conscience, the hot tears of penitence

and regret, the dark night of mystery and bereavement—these are all gone forever.

Think of the sweet words of the Apocalypse, "There shall be no night there"! In a cemetery, where a blind girl lies buried, there are inscribed on a tombstone that marks her resting place the words, "No Night." The story is told of a drummer boy on the battlefield of Fort Donelson. In the evening, when dying, he was heard singing that universal hymn:

"Nearer, my God, to thee,
  Nearer to thee,
E'en tho' it be a cross
  That raiseth me;
Still all my song shall be
Nearer, my God, to thee,
  Nearer to thee.

"Though like a wanderer,
  The sun gone down,
Darkness be over me,
  My rest a stone.
Yet in my dreams I'd be,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
  Nearer to thee.

"There let the way appear,
  Steps unto heaven,
All that thou sendest me,
  In mercy given;
Angels to beckon me,
Nearer, my God, to thee,
  Nearer to thee."

Out of the black night of that bloody battlefield, that Christian boy, far away from home and mother, went up

to that better country, where there are no wars, no bloodshed, no sin, no sorrow, no tears, no death, no separations, no mystery, but a country of undimmed light and widening circle of friendships and companionships. We shall know each other infinitely better there than we understand each other down here.

This conception of the heavenly country is enough to make us hopeful, happy, heroic, and helpful in all the sweet ministries of this life, and to put into our hearts the sentiment and song of the poet:

"We are bearing, Father, bearing
Burdens thou hast kindly given;
We are learning to be patient,
While earth's chains are being riven;
And the links that bind our spirits
To their destiny above,
Thou art forging from our sorrows,
Thou art riveting in love.

"We are learning, Father, learning
Not to murmur or complain;
Though our dearest friendships fail us,
And our fondest hopes are vain.
Thou dost hold us by a cable,
With its anchor in the sky,
And we wait 'mid shattered idols,
For the dawning, by and by."

The heavenly city may be near or far off, but its hills are in faith's sight. The city appears in view. The spires of the temple gleam in the splendor of Him who is the light of it. This anticipation inspires us to live a life down here worthy of the glory that awaits us over yonder.

Hear the charming description: "Lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and

kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in the hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne . . . saying, Amen; blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever."

"What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

What compensations await the Christian in the heavenly life! For old age, immortal youth; for mystery, knowledge; for dishonor, glory; for weakness, strength; for weariness, rest; for corruption, incorruption; for mortality, immortality; for earth, heaven.

Blessed thought! Heaven is our home, our city, our country, our abiding place—our eternal satisfaction.—Christ himself is its Light.

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